EXPLORING SCHOOL FACTORS FOR STUDENTS' POOR

PERFORMANCE IN FORM FOUR NATIONAL EXAMINATIONS IN

ENGLISH LANGUAGE IN TANZANIA

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A DISSERTATION SUBMITTED IN PARTIAL FULLFILLMENT OF THE

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## CERTIFICATION

The undersigned certifies that she has read and hereby recommends for acceptance by the Open University of Tanzania the dissertation titled: *"Exploring School Factors for Students' Poor Performance in Form Four National Examinations in English Language in Tanzania",* in the partial fulfilment of the requirement of the degree of Master of Education in Administration, Planning and Policy Studies of the Open University of Tanzania.

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Dr. Josephine Yambi

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………………………………………………….

Date

# DECLARATION

I, **Manga Matiko Mariba,** do hereby declare that this dissertation is my own work and that it has not been presented and will not be presented to any other university for a similar or any other degree award.

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Signature

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Date

# DEDICATION

This dissertation is dedicated to my late grandparents: Emmanuel Muniko and Rebecca Mataye Muniko, who tirelessly laboured greatly to bring me up and teach me on 3Rs that is reading, writing, and arithmetic.

# ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

encouragement; my sons: Marwa, Ng'ariba, and Musabi for their prayers. Then, my parents, Musabi and Matinde; brothers, Mwl. Chacha, Muniko and Meni; sisters, Ghati, Rhobi, Rungu, Mkogoti and Mwise; and my beloved Uncle Peter Muniko for their tirelessly moral assistance, prayers and best wishes.

# ABSTRACT

This study dealt with *exploring school factors for students' poor performance in form four national examinations in English language in Tanzania*. Two objectives guided this study. The first; was to explore how teaching and learning methods contributed to students' poor performance in English language, and the second was to examine how teaching and learning environment contributed to students' poor performance in English language. The study used quantitative paradigm method supplemented by qualitative methods. The methods used to collect the data were: questionnaire, interview, observation and Inventory. The instruments used were questionnaire guides and questions for both teachers and students, observation schedule, interview guides and inventory guidelines. The study found the following methods of teaching and learning of English language, used in secondary schools: discussion, debate. Question and answer, small group discussion, lecture. Role play, project and dialogue. On the other hand, teaching and learning environments had great relationship as factors for students poor performance in English language in public secondary schools. The study recommended that the government should make the ratio of teacher-students is 1:35 to 40. Also, build school libraries and provide textbooks and reference books as well as librarians. Number of periods should be fifteen to twenty per week and there should be school inspections and teacher seminars.

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# LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

BEST          Basic Education Statistics in Tanzania

CR            Conditioned Response

CS            Conditioned Stimuli

CIPP          Contexts, Inputs, Processes, and Products/Outcomes

ELTSP         English Language Teaching Support Project

IMF           International Monetary Fund

LG1           First Language or Mother Tongue

LG2           Second Language or Foreign Language

MOEVT         Ministry of Education and Vocational Training

NECTA         National Examination Council of Tanzania

ODA           Overseas Development Agency

S1-S6         Names of Secondary Schools studied

TUKI          Taasisi ya Uchunguzi wa Kiswahili

MOI           Medium of Instruction

LOI           Language of Instruction

DIPL          Diploma

DEGR          Degree

TLTEL         Teaching and Learning Techniques of English Language

TELTA         Tanzania English Language Teachers Association

**CHAPTER ONE**

**INTRODUCTION**

**1.1    Introduction**

This chapter is exploring school factors for students' performance in English language in secondary schools in Tanzania, focusing on the background of the problem, the statement of the problem, the general and specific objectives of the study. Other aspects are research hypothesis, significance of the research, scope and study setting, limitations and delimitation of the research.

**1.2    Background of the Study**

In the education system English is used as a medium of instruction in secondary schools and higher learning institutions, and taught as a subject in public primary schools. On the other hand, Kiswahili as its rival is used as a medium of instruction in public primary schools. Here again, there are debates on whether English should continue with the status it has or it should be replaced by Kiswahili. Through this argument, English creates two notions of educationists. Those who support that English should continue to maintain its current status and those who are saying that Kiswahili should replace English. According to Asheli (2010), the former educationists have the following ideas:

(i)      English is the language of today's world business. So, Tanzanians have to learn English throughout in order to function in today's world.

(ii)     English is a well-developed language due to its long history.

(iii)    English should be learnt through speaking practice.

(iv)     English has many written books, hence easier to be studied.

(v)      English is everyone's property today. It is no longer a colonial language. It is spoken in different parts of the world. So, there is no justification for equating English with colonialism.

(vi)     Learning English makes a child divergent in ideas. A person who speaks many languages is like a person who is living in many worlds, because each language looks at the world differently from other languages, so, that they may explore those riches.

According to these ideas, the prosperity of English is the result of good plans at the beginning. English is a universal one, is not specific to a particular nation. Therefore, if English is at risk even the presence of world education or business is at risk. Risking of English in Tanzania is to risk education development system. On the other hand, according to Asheli (2010) there are people who think that English has nothing to do with development in our country, they argue that students do not have to use English in studies, the action which sometimes leads to its low standards and falls down. The following are some of the points, they make:

(i)      English is a foreign language. Making students learn through a foreign language is like colonising their minds. So, we should get rid of this language. Therefore, to them, when students perform poorly in English, they cherish and say that it is because the government is not listening to them and change the language policy.

(ii)     Students learn better when they use the language they know well like Kiswahili. Unfortunately, Tanzanians do not know English well. So, making

them continue learning through it is to endanger education in the country. These scholars, do not accept the use of English as medium of instruction as well as in assessment in secondary education and higher education.

(iii)    No language is endowed with scientific knowledge. So, it is a myth to believe that English is the language of science and technology. Any language including Kiswahili can be the language of science and technology.

(iv)    Already teachers teach using code switching. If many classes can be observed, could be found that teachers speak a lot of Kiswahili when teaching rather than English. This practice leads to risk English, an action which comes to be seen in the final examinations, where massive of students score poor grades in English subject.

From the above notions, both sides indicate that there is a problem not in English, but in the language policy of Tanzania. There is no clear language policy that govern and check the language teaching and learning in the country. Therefore, this study dealt with poor performance of form four students in recent years and attempted to examine why students are failing while the government does not show up for remedial.

## 1.3    Statement of the Research Problem

Despite the fact that various studies have been conducted, such as Mvungi (1974), Mushi (1982), Mlekwa (1997), Nyamubi and Mdima (2003) found the causes of poor performance in English language, the problem is still critical in recent years.  For example, the number of students who sat for Form Four National Examination in

English language in 2010 were 350,753. The number of students who passed in English language at the credit of A to D were only 106,393, at the percentage of thirty point three (30.3%), out of the total number of students who sat for English examination (BEST, 2011). This means 244,360 students scored F in English language; at the percentage of sixty nine point seven (69.7%). Table 1.1 show the summary of Pass Rate in Form Four Examination for English language Subject for School candidates, 2010-2012. The duration is taken to demonstrate English language performance in secondary schools in recent years.

**Table 1.1: Pass Rate in Form Four National Examination in English Language**

| Year | Candidates sat for examination | Candidates passed | % of those passed |
|------|--------------------------------|-------------------|-------------------|
| 2010 | 350753 | 106392 | 30.3 |
| 2011 | 335799 | 101118 | 30.1 |
| 2012 | 397005 | 103574 | 26.09 |
| **Total** | **1083557** | **311084** | **86.49** |

**Source:** BEST (2011, 2013)

From the statistics provided in BEST (2011 &2013), Basic Mathematics listed the last subject at 16.1%, followed by English language at 30.3% in 2010, but in 2011 and 2012 English language was the third from the last after Basic Mathematics and History subjects at 14.6%,11.3% and 28.3%, 24.4% respectively (BEST, 2013). With this evidence the situation became an educational and a research problem, hence, needed to be researched. Another evidence is from one of the big schools in Dar-es-Salaam (2010-2012).

**Table 1.2: English language National Examination Results NECTA (2010-2012)**

| Year | No Students | Passed | Failed | Grade | Divisions |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 2010 | 584 | 345 | 146 | A – 0<br>B - 14<br>C&D – 331<br>F - 212 | I - 11<br>II – 37<br>III – 71<br>IV – 329 |
| 2011 | 537 | 273 | 101 | A – 0<br>B - 2<br>C&D – 27<br>F - 264 | I - 1<br>II – 13<br>III – 36<br>IV – 296 |
| 2012 | 714 | 375 | 339 | A – 0<br>B - 2<br>C&D – 283<br>F - 371 | I - 3<br>II – 15<br>III – 31<br>IV – 276 |

**Source:** NECTA (2010-2012)

From these data, English seems at risk, it needs serious and critical interventions that can rectify the situation.

## 1.4 General Objective of the Study

The study explores school factors for students' performance in English Language in secondary schools.

## 1.5 Specific Objectives of the Research

1.5.1 To explore how teaching and learning methods are related to students' performance in English language in secondary schools in Tanzania.

1.5.2 To examine how teaching and learning environment contributes for students' performance in English language in secondary schools in Tanzania.

**1.6     Research Hypotheses**

According to the Concise Dictionary (2008), hypothesis could be defined as a supposition or proposed explanations made on the basis of limited evidence as a starting point for further investigation. The two hypotheses of this study are stated as follows:

1.6.1   Students' poor performance in English language is related to methods of teaching and learning applied,

1.6.2.  Students' poor performance in English language is contributed by school teaching and learning environment.

**1.7     Significance of the Study**

Justification or significance of the research/study is when the researcher points out the solutions to the problem or the answer to the question that could or would influence educational theory or practice (Omari, 2011). This aspect is a vital one, since it demonstrated why it was worthy time, effort, and expenses required to carry out the proposed research. First, the study will be beneficial to other researchers who will be interested to the topic. Secondary, the research can be applied in various aspects to solve educational issues or problems, such as:

(i)     Education decision makers can apply the study to solve the issues concerned or facing English in the country.

(ii)    The analytical people/policy makers can utilise the study in constituting the optimal plan or policy of language studies or other subjects.

(iii)   Teachers can apply the recommended ideas for eliminating the problem confronting their profession.

(iv) Students who were/are mainly the victims, can improve the learning techniques so that should get rid of the calamity.

## 1.8    Definition of Terms

1.8.1 According to Wikipedia.org Student performance is the outcome of education in the extent to which a student or a teacher or institution has achieved their educational goal. In this study, students' performance is measured by national examinations in English subject.

1.8.2 Teaching method comprises the principles and techniques used for instructions in the classroom. Commonly methods selected in this study were participatory, like discussion, small group discussion, debate, jig saw etc. From www. Webcrawler.com/

1.8.3 Teaching/learning environment is the sum of the internal and external circumstances and influences surrounding and affecting students' learning, from the freedictionary.com/learning+environment. Examples of teaching/learning environment found at the studied schools were inadequate of teaching and learning facilities like textbooks, libraries etc.

## 1.9    Scope and Study Setting

Scope implies the area in which the study should be conducted. Due to limited financial capacity and time bound/limit, the study was conducted only in Kinondoni and Ilala Districts in Dar-es-Salaam. The public secondary schools selected were visited, and some of education institutions like NECTA, MOEVT and TIE.

**1.10    Limitation**

Limitation means lack of abilities or strength that control what a person /researcher could not be able to do. In this study, the researcher has encountered the constraints emanated from research methods, research design, samples and sampling strategies, uncontrolled variables, faulty instrumentations, and other compromises to internal and external validity (Omari, 2011). For instance, the populations or samples and instruments identified may not underpin the research objectives and hypothesis, due to the data or information collected or provided. Vividly, during the process of data collection, the researcher was constrained by the following limitations:

Firstly, some of respondents were not ready or willing to provide the information required, for example, some of the closed questions/requests in the questionnaire were left blank. Secondly, at S5, teachers hesitated to be observed, by just saying that the researcher was the one to be observed.

Thirdly, some of the data missed, for example, data of English result in 2011 at S4. Fourthly, some of the selected respondents did not fish to fill the questionnaire at the right time. Moreover, few students did not fill the questions properly as well as leaving the closed questions unanswered. Despite these limitations, it was felt that much of insights were gained from the study, where by the findings found enhanced the objectives and can be generalised to other schools with similar characteristics.

**1.11 Delimitation**

The data which have been collected from the samples interpreted the objectives appropriately.

**CHAPTER TWO**

**LITERATURE REVIEW**

**2.1      Introduction**

This chapter is a review of related theories and other studies from educational psychologists, linguists, behaviourists, and researchers who did study on the related topic. Some specific books, research articles, dissertations/theses and journals have been reviewed. Lastly, the chapter includes the conceptual framework.

**2.2      Theories on Second/Foreign Language (English) Learning in Relation to This Study**

The issues of success and fail in a second/foreign language (English) learning have been studied and discussed by researchers who most of them are psychologists, linguists, evaluators, and educationists (Mdima, 2003). The fundamental question is what are the conditions which promote learners to perform better in English language examinations in both spoken and the written.

Many theories on the process of English language learning have been expounded by various psychologists (behaviourists). Language learning according to Pavlov is Conditioned Reflex (Gleitman, 1992). The corresponding terms for conditioned reflex are Conditioned Stimuli (CS) and Conditioned Response (CR); Unconditioned Stimuli (US) and Unconditioned Response (UR). Pavlov conducted a research/experiment on a dog in a parlour in a laboratory. The study indicated that the way the event was repeated, the response behaviour was increased. See the Table 2.1 adapted from Gleitman (1992).

**Table 2.1: Relationship between CS & US, CR & UR in Classical Conditioning**

| | |
|---|---|
| BEFORE TRAINING | Animal response |
| US (food in mouth)………………………………..UR (Salivation) | |
| CS (eg tone)…………………………………….No relevant response | |
| TRAINING | |
| CS (tone)                          +                          US ( food in mouth) | |
| | |
| AFTER TRAINING ( that is conditioning) | |
| CS (tone)…………………………………………CR (Salivation) | |
| | |

Source: Gleitman, (1992)

From this experiment, language learning is based on repetition of action or making practice of certain activities till when knowledge, skills and attitude required is fully attained in its perfection. Therefore, English should be taught and learnt in a repeated way of learning skills, such as speaking, reading, writing and listening (Gleitman, 1992).

Another theoretical review is by Thorndike in the law of effect (Gleitman, 1992). According to Thorndike, some responses get strengthened and others weakened as learning process proceeds. The critical question is how the correct response gets strengthened until it finally overwhelms the incorrect one, which at first is so dominant. Thorndike proposed the "Law of Effect" and held that the consequences (that is the effect) of a response determines whether the tendency to perform it is strengthened or weakened. If the response is followed by reward, it will be strengthened, but when the response is followed by the absence of reward or worse or by punishment, it will be weakened (Gleitman, 1992).

In this theory, learning of English is strengthened when students acquire the optimal objectives planned or intended by the teacher and weakened if curriculum objectives have not been acquired. In this study, the researcher has investigated the categories of teaching and learning English in public secondary schools in Kinondoni and Ilala districts in Dar-es-Salaam Tanzania in relation to poor performance in National Examinations.

Another psychologist who has conducted research under this aspect is Skinner, who dealt with the issue of Operant Behaviour (Gleitman, 1992). B.F. Skinner shaped the way in which most modern theorists think about the subject. Skinner insisted that in instrumental conditioning the organism is much less at the mercy of external situation. Its reactions are emitted from within as if they were what we ordinarily call voluntary; Skinner called the instrumental response operant, they operate on the environment to bring about some changes that lead to reward. Like Thorndike, Skinner believed in "Law of Effect", insisting that the tendency to emit this operant is strengthened or weakened by its consequences (Gleitman, 1992). In the application of the theory, a teacher as a facilitator should apply the methodology to shape the learner in a required objective.

Through these steps learners are transformed from unknowing to knowing stage or from simple to complex. Skinner indicates that learning involves series of steps until the effectiveness. From Skinner's theory, the study has examined whether the teaching and learning methods employed created the law of effect. Another review done was on applied Linguistics. Applied linguistics is often used to refer to application of linguistics theory to second language teaching and learning (O'Grady,

Dobrovolsky and Katamba, 1996). This theory is applicable to the study because English language in Tanzania is both second language (L2) and foreign language.

The common terms applied in linguistics are language acquisition and language learning. Language acquisition and learning are used interchangeably in the process of second language mastering. Second language acquisition involves both conscious and subconscious process regardless of age of the learner and language learning environment. This study dealt with the investigation on teaching and learning methods and environment which influence the performance of English. Applied linguistics is mostly addressing the following:

(i) Is the learning of English as a second language at all, similar to the way of learning or acquiring the first language (L1)? For instance, learning or acquiring of English language is the same as learning or acquiring of Sukuma or Kiswahili language in Tanzania?

(ii) What is the effect of age on language learning process? The linguists suggest that the optimal age for language learning or acquisition is around the age of puberty, based on biological, cognitive, and affective aspects. Example pronunciation is mastered in this age (O'Grady, et al., 1996).

Under this study, the researcher concentrated on learning environment rather than age and second language learning in comparison to first language. O'Grady, et al (1996) expounded various aspects that enhance language learning through environment. Second language learning can take place in different environments: natural, formal, and combination of both natural and formal environment.

(i)     The natural environment. Is when learning a second language (L2) takes place in the host country or in an immersion program involving natural environment, and the focus is on communication skills.

(ii)    The formal environment. Learning a second language (L2) in a classroom situation or in any situation where a prescribed course of study followed involves formal environment.

(iii)   The combination of natural and formal. Natural and formal environment might entail studying the second language in a classroom in the host country.

The language learners who study second language (L2) like English in the host countries, such as Britain or United States of America, generally outperform those who study English in a formal structured classrooms (outside host country). It is noted that living in the host country provides natural environment for communicating which is rarely found in a classroom.  Contact with native speakers can also help to break down social and cultural barriers. But in classroom or formal classroom environment, second language learners do not have much time for spontaneous conversations about daily events, mostly students are occupied with drills, translation, and grammar, while only part of the class hours is free for conversations and language games (O'Grady, et al., 1996). The explanation is partly related with research objectives, especially on the issue of formal classroom environment. Therefore, the research has involved learning environment and other inputs like teachers, textbooks, libraries etc.

Another theoretical aspect of English learning is teaching methodologies and language teaching theories as the theories of teaching methods (O'Grady, et al 1996

& Stern, 1983 respectively). The field applied linguistics has been influenced by theoretical trends in linguistics, psychology, and sociology on various methodologies and approaches in English language learning.

The common methods identified were: Grammar- Translation/ Traditional Methods, Direct Methods, Audio-lingual Methods, Audio-Visual Methods and Communicative Language Methods.

(a) Grammar-Translation or Traditional Method Theory. This method of language teaching was the first method to be used. The source of the method was from Latin and Greek.

> *'The method emphasised on reading, writing, translation, and conscious learning of grammatical rules. The primary goal of the approach is to develop literacy mastery of second language like English. Memorisation is the main learning strategy and students spend their class hours talking about the language''* (Stern, 1983:43)

The method does not create creativity or discovery learning, it bases on rote learning. Hence, such method is no longer desired to be applied.

(b) Direct Method: The method originated in the 17th century as an alternative to literacy mastery/memorisation through grammar-translation. Teachers are supposed to create natural classroom environment for learning to take place. Main emphasis is based on communicative rather than grammar rules. Teachers believed that through dialogue, that is question and answer, English as second language will be acquired. The researcher was interested to see whether the teaching method employed is direct method and how effective it is.

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(c) Audio-lingual Method: Second language teachers and researchers turned to the linguist and behaviourist learning theories of 1950s. Audio-lingual method involves classroom and language laboratories. Students are conditioned to respond correctly to either oral or written stimuli. The behaviourists and modern behaviourists used this method i.e. Skinner and Osgood respectively.

(d) Communicative Language Teaching Theory/Method. This is an approach that seeks to produce communicative skills to the learners. The approach involves grammatical knowledge of the system, extends to abstract domains/knowledge of the appropriateness of language use. Also, a communicative competent student should know how to produce appropriate natural, and social acceptance utterances in all context of communication. For instance:

> *"Hey, buddy, you fix my car", is grammatical correct, but not as effective in most social context as, "Excuse me, sir, I was wondering whether I could have my car fixed today"* (Stern, 1983:51).

This is what the researcher expects the form four students to demonstrate through their daily activities, even in their final examinations and show up their good remarks by obtaining appropriate grades. Therefore, the research has succeeded to find out the risking factors for English, despite all these theoretical approaches of teaching English language.

**2.3    Review from Researchers and Evaluators of English Performance in Tanzania**

Among the researchers and evaluators of English language teaching approaches/methods/techniques in schools are Richard and Rodgers (1995) who

discussed in depth the relationship between the theory of language learning and approach/method. They insisted on the use of approaches/methods, learning objectives, the syllabus model, role of teachers and learners, and the instructional materials appropriately. To them, they learnt that bilingualism and multilingualism in any society acts as an obstacle in learning second language like English in Tanzania, especially in the 19th century. Richard and Rodgers suggested some innovation in facilitating a foreign language learning as described below:

> *"The goal of foreign language study is to learn a language in order to read its literature or in order to benefit from the mental discipline and intellectual development that result from foreign society. Therefore, language learning is more than memorising rules and facts in the classrooms. They must be followed by the application of that knowledge in the environment of learning for more understanding"* (Richard and Rodgers, 1995:35).

The second group of researchers who have studied on the problems which influence English performance include Kapoli (2001). He maintains that second language students who engage in writing only will result into two major mistakes; First, there will be a lot of mistakes in punctuation and grammar, because of being affected by the vernacular or mother tongue and second, there will be a lot of mistakes in cultural implications of the target language because the culture of language is found mostly in spoken. So naturalistic conversation is vital in school environment.

According to Kapoli (2001), English problem rose as the consequence of the first language, basing on writing and speaking. In the current syllabus, this is not a problem, because it bases on communicative skills. Therefore, this study has not

concentrated on the effect of mother tongue for the performance of English in final examinations.

Shehu (2001) states clearly that the English language students should be driven by need to show evidence of goal attainment in statistical terms, such as content coverage, examination, and enrolment rate. Shehu discovered one of the problems which causes poor performance to students in Tanzania at their examinations, he said: "One of the failure is by taking a very partial view of education. They allow the core curriculum to crowd out interactive co-curricular activities which are very important and complimentary to core curriculum" (Shehu, 2001:26).

Also, Mvungi (1982) listed problems that led to crises in English language, such as: poor teacher training, poor methods of teaching, scarcity of textbooks and frequently change of syllabus. Also, Mushi (1982) concluded that the main factor which led to poor performance in English language is the low level of competence to teachers. Lastly, Mlekwa (1997) came out with a reason of great shortage of English language teaching materials as the cause of poor performance in English.

Other researchers who conducted researches on English performance include, first, Mtana (1998) who dealt with the evaluation of English Language Teaching Support Project (ELTSP) and the 8th International Development Agency (IDA), sponsored by the British Council. The projects dealt with the provision of grammar textbooks to public secondary schools, based only in urban areas. Hence, the projects did not cover the whole country. Second, Nyamubi (2003) conducted a research on attitudinal and motivational factors influencing performance in English among

Tanzanian secondary schools. He concluded that English language teaching and learning is positively affected by attitudinal and motivational aspects.

Third, is a recent study by Mwikwabe (2010) who researched on the Relationship between Extroversion-Introversion and English Language Performance in Tanzanian Secondary Schools. Extroversion means the act, state or habit of being predominantly concerned with and obtaining gravitation from what is outside the self while Introversion means the state or tendency toward being wholly or predominantly concerned with and interested in one's own mental life (www.merrian -webster.com//extroversion-introversion). Mwikwabe concluded that there is no relationship between extroversion-introversion and English language performance.

Furthermore, in his study, Mdima (2000) concluded that the standard of English language teaching and learning in secondary schools was very low. He said:

> *"The problem includes the whole system of education in Tanzania and the government itself is the part of the problem. They are not serious enough to improve the situation of English language learning and teaching by not producing competent teachers and incentive for them. Teachers and learners are at one part of the problem of English learning and teaching at secondary schools"*(Mdima, 2000: 15).

Mdima realised that there might be lack of seriousness, inquisitiveness, creativity, devotion in the process in English Language National Form Four Examination for Secondary Schools. The shortcoming of Mdima's study is that it dealt with only pronunciations or sound in English language. Mushi (1989) acknowledged that there

was incompetence in English for the students of Tanzania Secondary Schools. She claimed that the problem was due to poor preparation for teachers of English language in the college, who in a long run cause problems to learners.

Mushi blamed that the syllabi of all levels are not considering the environment of learners as far as exposure to English was concerned. She also noted that there was lack of facilities and motivations toward teaching and learning English. These were mentioned as a source of incompetence in English in secondary schools. Mushi's study was extremely based on teachers' inabilities or incompetence, whereas, this is not only the core problem for students' fail are in English in recent years.

In another study, Mdima (2003) researched on factors causing poor performance in English in Form Four National Examination to Community Secondary Schools in Tanzania. His study was conducted in Ilala District at Benjamin Mkapa Secondary School. He came out with the following problems that led to poor performance in English:

(i)     Lack of intellectual climatic condition for learning English in Schools,

(ii)    Inappropriate teaching methods in English language,

(iii)   Incompetence for teachers in English language,

(iv)    Lack of motivation,

(v)     Lack of strictness and devotion in teaching English language,

(vi)    Lack of guidance and counselling to students,

(vii)   Lack of learning facilities: textbooks, reference books etc.

The weakness or gap of the study is that it concentrated only to community schools, furthermore the study was conducted only at Benjamin William Mkapa secondary school. The mass failure is not only experienced by a single community secondary school, but in almost all secondary schools in Tanzania.

Also, Qorro (2008) did a literature survey of research on the LOI in Tanzania over the last forty years. With just one exception, all the studies surveyed indicated that students do much better when Kiswahili is used as Medium of Instruction (MOI) than when English or code switching is used. Several studies in the LOITASA show the great difficulties students have to cope with in the class when the Medium of Instruction is English, a language students seldom use outside the classroom, and one which is characterised as a foreign to most students.

Therefore, according to Qorro's study, teaching and learning is effectively taking place when the language used is clearly known by students and teachers, hence suggested change of language of instruction from English to Kiswahili, and English to be taught as a subject. She recommended some steps to be regarded by stakeholders such as policy makers, parents and general public as follows:

(i)    Policy makers need to go back to the drawing board and examine the objectives of English language teaching and align them with language policy and planning so that classroom practice matches the said objective.

(ii)   Researchers need to sensitise and update policy makers, parents and the general public on research findings from classroom observations, so that all stakeholders of education know the consequences of precious decisions so far made and take steps to arrest the situation.

(iii)   Researchers and Educationists need to realise that enough research has been done on the issues of LOI to enable policy makers to move on to the next steps, which is to advocate for establishment of Kiswahili medium in schools in order to demonstrate findings of research through application.

(iv)   Researchers and educationists in Tanzania need to network with their counterparts on the continent and to form activist movement that coordinates research on the language of instruction in Africa and other least developed countries to strengthen the effort towards using indigenous language as a language of instruction from secondary to tertiary level.

(v)   Policy makers should introduce a system that requires scholars and researchers in Africa, in this case Tanzania to produce a translation of their research findings or other writings in languages that the majority of people in their communities can access (Qorro, 2008). This study, was not dealing with teaching-learning methods and environment of English language in secondary schools, but dealt with which language should be language of instruction (LOI) in secondary schools. And she ended by popularising Kiswahili as the language of instruction through the media in Tanzania (Qorro, 2004, 93).

## 2.4    Research Gap Identified

Despite the fact that a lot of researches/studies have been conducted to try to curb the English language at risk in secondary schools, the results of 2010 to 2012 in English National Examinations acknowledge the existence of unsolved problems over years. Therefore, this study has realised more than three gaps: first, most of studies have been conducted many years ago; second, they did not identify the methods of

teaching and learning used; third no description of class environment has been made, and fourthly, no any research/study done among these years for this educational problem that face English. Thus, this study intended to investigate deeply on why English status continues to deteriorate in secondary school students performance.

## 2.5    Conceptual Framework

The conceptual framework involves some imaginations or hypothetical thought, mostly used in quantitative studies. The conceptual framework for this study is CIPP adopted from Omari (2011). It includes the following variables: 'C' stands for Contextual variables, 'I' Input or Predictor variables, 'P' Process or Mediating variables, and 'P' for Product or Output variable (Omari, 2011). Graphically it can be presented in Table 2.2.

**Table 2.2: Conceptual Framework Variables in this Study**

| C | I | P | P |
|---|---|---|---|
| **Contextual variables** | **Predictor variables** | **Mediating variables** | **Outcome variables** |
| Government investment<br>Education policy<br>School investment<br>Family community investment | Teachers' ability<br>Students' ability<br>Teaching materials<br>Teachers attitude<br>Students attitude | Teaching activities<br>Learning activities<br>Teachers' effort<br>Students efforts<br>Time spend | No behaviour change<br>Massive failure<br>Low grades<br>A lot of researches<br>Low knowledge and skills |

Source: Adapted from Omari (2011)

Some conceptual variables that may lead to poor performance in English language are explained in details below:

(a) Government investment in education especially in English language,

(b) Educational policy in English language

(c) School investment in English language

(d) Family and community investment in English language.

The Predictor variables that might be the direct culprit of English language are:

1. Teacher and students' abilities

2. Teaching and learning materials

3. Teaching and learning environment

4. Teachers' educational level

5. Teacher- students ratio

6. Students' attitude.

The Mediating variables may be:

(a) Teaching and learning activities employed,

(b) Teachers' efforts

(c) Students' efforts

(d) Time spend

(e) Parents' roles.

The outcome variables as seen in final examinations:

First, no change of behaviour/attitude, second, English language continue to be at risk/ nation at risk, third, Massive failure, fourth, low/few grades, fifth, lot of

research to find out causes; and final, Minute knowledge and skills gain in reading, writing, speaking and listening. This Conceptual Framework has based on the objectives of this study.

## CHAPTER THREE

## RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

### 3.1    Introduction

Research methods means the general strategies or plan of work to be followed when dealing with research (Kothari, 2003). This chapter presents the research design including population of the study, sampling frame, sample and sampling technique, instruments, data collection procedures, data processing and analysis and ethical considerations.

### 3.2    Research Paradigm

Research paradigm can be defined as a universally recognised scientific achievement that for time, provide model problems and solutions for community of researchers. Sometimes, a paradigm simply means a pattern or model, an exemplar (Omari, 2011). The paradigm chosen for this study was the one to describe why students fail(ed), or obtained poor grades in English language in recent years. Hence, quantitative paradigm has been used with triangulation of qualitative paradigm.

### 3.3    Research Design

Research design is a distinct plan on how a research problem will be attacked (Omari, 2011). The appropriate research design that was applied in this research problem or phenomenon is Causal Comparative or' Ex Post Facto' research design. Causal Comparative has explored the possible causes and effect relationship between variables through observing some existing consequences, and searching back through the data for plausible causal variables, factors as explanations (Omari, 2011). Causal

comparative deals with cause and effect. It focuses on: first, Seeking to describe the cause of an already experienced phenomena such as failing of English, mathematics, drop out in schools, failing quality in education, and so on, second, demanding an isolation of the key variables in a cause-effect relationships equation.

Therefore, the researcher was interested for using this research design to find out the factors for cause of already existed bad results in English language performance in form four national examinations in English language in Tanzania.

### 3.4    Area of study

The study took place in Dar-es-Salaam region particularly in Kinondoni and Ilala districts. The study based on government secondary schools. The number of secondary schools studied were six, coded S1 to S6.

### 3.5    Population

Population is the totality of any group of units which have one or more characteristics in common, that are of interest to research (Kothari, 2003). In this study the population were students, teachers, and school administrators/ education officers. The targeted population are students in secondary schools in Tanzania, because the poor performance in English language is the result of what they have been doing or studying. On investigating the cause, others were teachers, and education administrators. The grade level focused in the study were form three and four. Form three and four are the expected candidates for the coming national examinations.

**3.6    Sampling Frame**

Sample is a small proportion of a population selected for observations and analysis (Omari, 2011). In the other words it is a group of people or things that are taken from a larger group and studied, tested, or questioned to get information (Merriam Webster's Dictionary). And sampling frame means the structure or source from which the sample is drawn. The sampling frame of the population in this study were few students and teachers selected from some of government secondary schools in Kinondoni and Ilala Districts in Dar-es-Salaam Tanzania.

**3.7    Sample Size**

Sample size refers to the number of individuals or persons to be selected from the population to constitute a sample (Kothari, 2003). The researcher selected the sample size which was 72 optimum for fulfilling the requirement of the research problem in efficiency, representativeness, reliability and validity. The respondents were five teachers, five students, a librarian and one academic teacher or head of English department from each secondary school. The samples were taken from six secondary schools (S1 to S6).

**3.8    Sampling Technique**

Sampling technique refers to a plan for obtaining a sample from a given population (Kothari, 2003). Sampling technique is sometimes called sampling design or procedure and sometimes a researcher would adapt in selecting the population sample. The researcher has applied probability and non-probability sampling techniques. Probability sampling is a sampling technique where the samples are gathered in a process that gives all the individuals in the population equal chances of

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being selected. In probability sampling, the researcher used simple and cluster random probability sampling to get samples of students and teachers from the population and in classroom observation. All students and teachers from the secondary schools studied had equal opportunity to be selected.

And non- probability sampling is a sampling technique which use whatever samples available, rather than following a specific subject selection process (Omari. 2011). In non-probability sampling, the purposive sampling was chosen so as to meet the targeted population like Academic Master in a school and the head of English Department and other education officers from educational institutions.

## 3.9    Instruments

According to Enon (1995) an instrument or tool is the technique / procedures of data collection. In this study, the instruments were questionnaires guidelines and questions, interview guides, observation guides, and inventory guides.

## 3.10    Data Collection Procedures

The data were collected or obtained from the sample, that are students from the sampled schools, English teachers, Academic masters and head of departments and other education officers. Data were collected by the researcher through questionnaires, interview, observation, and inventory. In the Questionnaires, the researcher prepared reliable and valid open and closed questions and guides that have encouraged students and teachers to provide the required data or information according to research objectives. The total number of respondents were sixty (thirty teachers and thirty students) (see Appendix A and B).  In the Observation procedure,

the researcher attempted to experience the real situation or process of English teaching and learning of students in the classrooms.

The guides were prepared by the researcher. Both teachers and students were observed on how they responded toward the given instructions. Four classrooms from different schools were observed. The first one was at S1, where the researcher observed teaching and learning activities to form four students. The number of students observed was 48, i.e. was not the number of students who were registered. The topic was reading literary works. And other observations, were done at S3, S4 and S5. (See Appendix C for guiding questions).

The researcher conducted six structured interviews to school administrators. Among these interviews, four were administered to academic masters, who were from S1, S3, S5 and S6. And the rest of the interviews were administered to the heads of English department at each school (S2 and S4). The structured interviews were administered as planned. The researcher read the questions or requests before the respondent, then the respondent provided the information needed and the researcher filled them in the interview form (See Appendix D for interview questions).

In the Inventory procedure, the researcher inquired on the availability of teaching and learning materials of English subject in the school libraries and English departments, through well-prepared forms to be filled by the librarian. At the school studied, only three schools had libraries and librarians i.e. S2, S4 and S6. But the rest of the schools had stores and storekeepers or teachers who were used for checking in and out of books. (See Appendix E for sample questions).

## 3.11    Data Processing and Analysis

Data processing implies editing, coding, classification, and tabulation of collected data, so that they are amenable to analyse (Kothari, 2003). Data analysis on the other hand, refers to the computation of certain measures along with searching for pattern of relationship that exist among data group (Kothari, 2003). Data processing and analysis involve omissions, interpretations, and evaluations of data collected (Manumbu 2004). The major aim of data processing and analysis is to see whether the data collected have met with the need of objectives and hypotheses. Therefore, the researcher has applied simple statistical and content means in data processing and analysis. Data is presented in tables and figures showing frequencies and percentages.

## 3.12    Logistics, Legal, and Ethical Considerations

Data for the study were collected for three months, from December 2013 to March 2014. Legal procedures have been recognised and followed in this research as stipulated by the Open University of Tanzania Directorate of Research, Publication and Postgraduate Studies. The authorising of research conducting was via the University principles, where the researcher was given the research clearance form.

Then, researcher went to Municipal Secondary Education Officer via Kinondoni Municipal Council to get research permit form to be taken to Headmistresses and Headmasters. At the school level, after the researcher submitted the research permission letter to the headmistress/headmaster, headmistress/headmaster informed the academic master who assisted in getting the information needed by the researcher. And the Ethical consideration was observed in the following steps: The

researcher consulted the supervisor on ethical issues in the University. The researcher abided with confidentialities from the schools and people whom he needed their information, for example, secondary schools are mentioned or coded as S1, S2, S3, S4, S5, and S6. There were no exposing or leaking of the information without the consent of the person who provided them. The researcher was humble to cultural and beliefs of his respondents. There was no bias, exposing, leaking, hyperbolising and understatement of the information from the respondents. The respondents consented on photos being taken during the classrooms' observation and inventory of books in libraries and other display use provided, however, their individual names are not mentioned.

## CHAPTER FOUR

## DATA PRESENTATION AND DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

### 4.1    Introduction

This study explored school factors for students' poor performance in form four national examinations in English language in recent years. This chapter presents data and discussion of the findings. Methods employed to collect the data were: questionnaires (for teachers and students), observation, interviews, and inventories. The secondary schools visited were six. The total number of teachers were thirty (30), students were thirty (30), academic teachers were four (4), head of English Departments were two (2) and Librarians were six (6). The total respondents were seventy two (72). Ethical considerations have been followed. The study was guided by the following two objectives:

(i)     To find out whether teaching and learning methods are related to students' performance in secondary schools.

(ii)    To investigate how teaching and learning environment contribute to students' performance in secondary schools.

The findings are presented in relation to the objectives of the study. Each part is presenting data from one section of the objective of the study. Part one is going to deal with the section of teaching methods which have been indicated by teachers through the questionnaire. The second part involves the section of teaching environment in which teaching of English language is taking place. The third part deals with the first section of the second objective, which is learning methods used by students when interacting in the class during English language learning. The

fourth part will deal with learning environments found in the Secondary Schools. Finally, the last part is going to present and discuss the information collected at Secondary Schools through academic teachers and head of English departments' interviews, indicating grades and number of students involved in previous National Examination results in English language particularly from 2010 to 2012.

## 4.2    Teaching Methods used to Teach English as Indicated by Teachers

Teaching methods are the principles or approaches used by teachers to instruct/ make students interact with teaching materials for achieving learning objectives. Teaching methods identified by teachers through questionnaire and classroom observation were: lecture, demonstration, question and answer, and discussion. Other teaching methods were:  small group discussion, debate, role play, drama, guest speaker, jig saw, film/video, and assignments.

**Table 4.1:  Methods used by Teachers During Teaching English language**

| Name of School | Lect | disc | q&a | Sgd | Dem | deb | r/p | Drm | g/s | j/s | Assg |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| S1 | - | - | 1 | 3 | - | 1 | - | | | | |
| S2 | 2 | 3 | 3 | 3 | 2 | 2 | 2 | 1 | - | - | 1 |
| S3 | 1 | 3 | 3 | 2 | 1 | - | 2 | - | 1 | - | - |
| S4 | - | 2 | 3 | - | 1 | 1 | - | - | - | - | - |
| S5 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 3 | 3 | 4 | 2 | - | - | 1 | - |
| S6 | - | 1 | 2 | 2 | 2 | - | - | - | - | 1 | - |
| **Total** | **5** | **12** | **16** | **14** | **9** | **8** | **6** | **1** | **1** | **2** | **1** |

**Key:** S1- name of school; lect-lecture; disc-discussion; q&a-question and answer; sgd- small group discussion; dem-demonstration; deb-debate; r/p-role play; drm-drama; guest speaker; g/s-guest speaker; j/s-jig saw; and assg-assignment.

Table 4.1 displays methods used by teachers during teaching of the English language. The data show that in the studied schools, question and answer; small group discussion methods were the teachers' favourite teaching methods. The data is also presented in Figure 4.1.
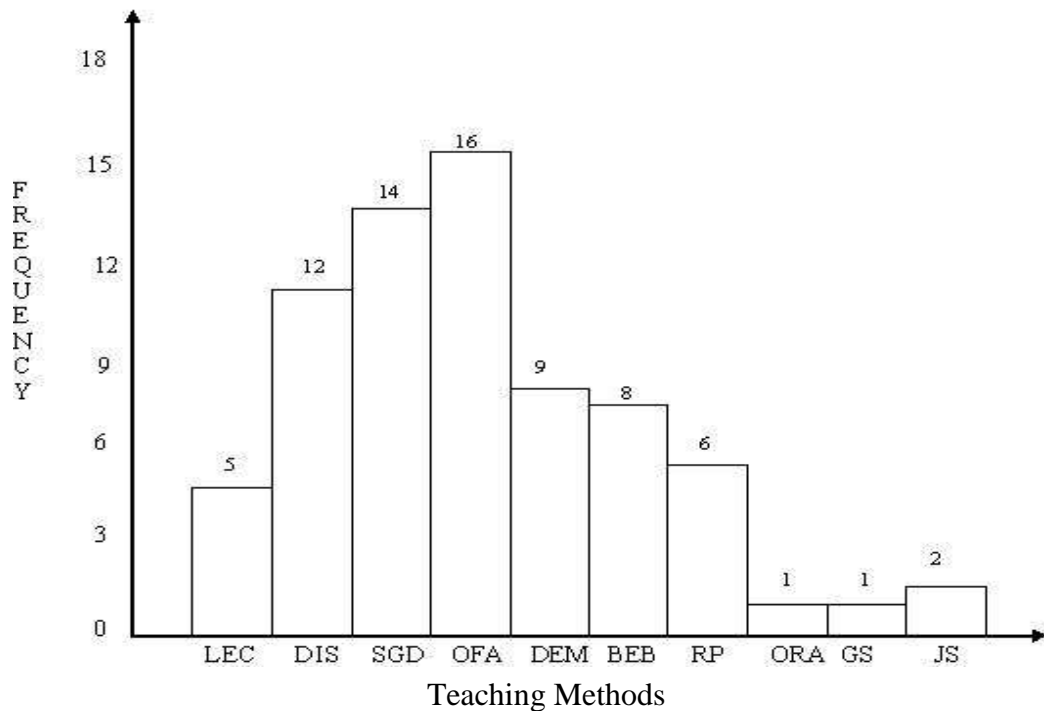


**Figure 4.1: Teaching Methods used by Teachers**

**Key**: LEC-lecture, DIS-discussion, SGD- small group discussion, Q&A- question and answer, DEM- demonstration, DEB-debate, RP role play, DRA- drama, GS- guest speaker and JS- jig saw

According to the table and the figure above, the teaching methods displayed, most of them are participatory methods. The teachers indicated in the questionnaire that students are active during the process of teaching English language in the classroom, when these methods are applied. Among the six secondary schools visited, only five

teachers responded to lecture method which is a non-participatory method. When such teachers were further asked, they defended the lecture method by providing the following reasons: first, lecture method is applied in congested classrooms. For instance, at S4 Secondary school during the researcher's observation, that method was used in classroom with over seventy students (see the picture on learning environment, pg 61). Also, S2, S3 and S5 Secondary Schools used lecture method. The second reason given for using lecture method was the scarcity of textbooks and long topics. However, only six percent (6%) of the teachers indicated that they were using this method in teaching English.

Other studies such as Stern (1983) revealed the same kind of teaching method was used by teachers. Particularly, the method dealt with Grammar-Translation aspects. The teaching method based on grammar rule memorisation, and did not create discovery learning to students. Stern noted that:

> *"The method emphasised on reading, writing, translation and the conscious learning of grammatical rules. The primary goal of the approach was to develop literacy mastery of the second language like English language. Memorisation was the main learning strategy and students spent their time talking about the language* (Stern, 1983: 43)".

As demonstrated in Table 6 and Figure 1, the second teaching method indicated was discussion method. The data presented above shows that sixteen percent (16%) of the total number of teachers indicated that discussion method is used in teaching English. Discussion method is an act of talking on a topic or subtopic with another person.

The teachers disclosed that they used discussion methods with students as a participatory one. For example, during the researcher's observation, a teacher from S5 secondary school employed discussion method when she/he was teaching about "Seeking and Giving Advice".

The third teaching method used was Small Group Discussion. The number of teachers who responded to this method were eighteen point six percent (18.6%) of the total respondents to teaching methods.  I observed that teachers organised or grouped students into small groups of five to eight for the activities. For example, the English teacher at S1 secondary school used the method when she was teaching "Reading Literary work: the novel, "*Passed Like a Shadow*" by Bernard Mapalala.

Also, another teacher at S3 Secondary School, who was teaching form four, used this method on the book "*Unanswered Cries"* on analysis of setting, plot, and characterisation. Students were grouped according to the number of books available in the class and the teacher asked students to read the novel aloud. Another teaching method found to be used, was "Question and Answer". Most of the teachers (respondents) seemed to employ this method. The study found that twenty one point three percent (21.3%) out of the total number of all respondents chose this method of teaching on the questionnaire.

The researcher observed that teachers do ask questions to students, when reviewing or introducing a new idea, or developing the lesson or finalising the ideas. Students respond by answering what has been asked to them. For instance, during researcher's

observation at S4, the English teacher used this method in form three when she was teaching the play "*This Time Tomorrow*" by Ngugi wa Thiong'o. Also, at S5 secondary school the teacher employed this method on the subtopic "Seeking and Giving Advice".

According to Stern (1983) the method was revealed as "Direct Method". This originated in the 17th century as an alternative to literary mastery and memorisation through grammar translation. The teachers were supposed to create natural classroom environment for learning to take place. Main emphasis was based on communicative rather than grammar rules. According to Stern teachers believed that through dialogue (question and answer), language two like English language will be gradually acquired (Stern, 1983).

The fifth listed teaching method indicated was 'demonstration'. The number of teachers who responded to this method was twelve percent (12%) out of seventy five respondents. This means a 'demo teacher or a student'. For instance, at S1 Secondary School, English teacher started reading aloud the novel, then tasked her students to continue reading literary work textbook *'Passed Like a Shadow'*. The teacher wished her students to imitate the reading skills.

Moreover, Stern (1983), identified the same method, which he called Audio-lingual method. The method represented the development of native like speaking ability in the learners. During audio lingual method the classroom and language laboratory were involved. In this method students were subjected to the correct responses through either oral or written ways (Stern, 1983). The sixth teaching method that

teachers in the study use is debate. Debate is the discussion among students by expressing various facts and opinions on a given topic or subtopic provided by the teacher. Only ten point seven percent (10.7%) of teachers responded to this method. Though the method was identified by many teachers, the researcher did not witness the use of this method during his classroom observation as a method they use for teaching.

The seventh teaching method listed was role play. Role play is the process of impersonating someone's behaviour or situation. Teachers organised their students to perform someone's responsibilities or activities or tasks like in the play or drama. The respondents to this method were eight percent (8%). The eighth and last teaching method which was indicated by few respondents were: drama, jig saw, guest speaker, and assignment (a task provided to students by the teacher). Drama is like the role play, where the activities are performed. Only one point three percent (1.3%) of teachers responded to this method of teaching English.

The other method was jig saw, which is used to shorten the time to be used when teaching many topics. Students are organised into groups according to the number of topics, then students are reorganised into new groups and given topics for discussion. For example, the second grouping involves all students given the same number from their original groups, that is all number one students from each group will form their group, same to number two up to the last number from the original groups. After this, the teacher provides the topics to discuss, when they finish, they go back to their original groups to narrate and describe what they have learnt during their discussion. This method was only responded by two point seven percent (2.7%). The guest

speaker as another teaching method involves letting of an expert to explain on certain subject matter which is not familiar to the teacher.

For example, letting an environmental health counsellor to give a talk to the class on outbreak of cholera. Lastly, was the assignment method which a teacher provide tasks to student to be done in two weeks or one month. From the discussed methods, the respondents did indicate that they appreciate the use of these methods. Most of teachers' arguments provided claim that these teaching methods are creativity oriented, basing on competence based syllabus. Secondly, the methods facilitate teaching and learning.

On the other hand, the respondents have argued that the methods require more instructional time. This means the time allocated for an English lessons i.e 35 to 40 minutes is not enough. For instance, one respondent from S2 Secondary School said, "This is not enough, because a teacher cannot use 35 or 40 minutes in teaching English language lesson which required integration of all the learning skills at the same time". The learning skills are speaking, reading, writing, and listening as were expounded by Gleitman (1992). Next to this, is the huge number of students in the classroom (50-70 per class) which is very difficult to monitor and provide instructions.

Finally, the scarcity of textbooks and reference books as also explained by Mdima (2003). All these become setback to the communicative language teaching methods (Stern, 1983). The respondents concluded that to curb the shortcoming, the drilling method should be used in teaching (Gleitman, 1992).

Also, there should be cooperation among the stakeholders i.e. teachers, students, government and parents, and the increase of capitation for buying books. Stern (1983), suggested that communicative method is the best teaching method that creates competent learners and an appropriateness of language use. Stern stated an example of wrong and correct statements of communicative language. He says: "Hey, buddy, you fix my car", is grammatically correct, but not as effective in most social context as: "Excuse me, sir I was wondering whether I could have my car fixed today".

Additionally, in their study, Richard and Rodgers (1995) insisted on the use of methods of teaching, learning objectives, syllabi model, role of teachers and learners and instructional materials. They concluded that bilingualism and multilingualism in any society act as an obstacle in learning a foreign language like English language in Tanzania, especially in the late 19th century up to now. Richard and Rodgers study support the findings of this study, especially on teaching methods (discussion, lecture, debate) and instructional materials (textbooks) for foreign language like English language. as follows:

> *"The goal of foreign language study is to learn a language in order to read its literature or order to benefit from mental discipline and intellectual development that result from foreign language society. Therefore, language learning is more than memorising roles and facts in classrooms. They must be followed by application of that knowledge in the environment of learning for more understanding* (Richard and Rodgers, 1995: 35)".

According to this quotation, when students come to be tested to apply the knowledge learnt in their study, to see whether they have acquired the skills needed (listening, reading, writing and speaking), most of them fail to reach the planned goal by scoring unsatisfactory grades as is going to be tabled in the end of this chapter. Hence, Richard and Rodgers' study support the findings of this study.

## 4.3    Teaching Environment of English Language Indicated by Teachers

Teaching environment involves all teaching facilities which enhance teaching. The teaching environment data were collected via questionnaire, observation, interview and inventory. These were as follows: teachers' level of education (diploma/degree); number of students in a class/stream; teacher-student ratio; number of English teachers in a school. Library presence and text and reference books; number of English teachers' seminars and inspections conducted in a school.

**Table 4.2: Teaching Environment at Schools Studied for English Teachers**

| Name of School | Dipl | Degr | t-s ratio | No. classes | b-s ratio | Seminar attended | Insp conducted | Nop |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| S1 | 3 | 3 | 1:50 | 5 | 1:12 | 1 | 1 | 6 |
| S2 | - | 5 | 1:45-50 | 3 | 1:5 | - | 1 | 5 |
| S3 | 1 | 4 | 1:58-62 | 4 | 1:10 | 1 | 3 | 5 |
| S4 | 3 | - | 1:50-70 | 4-6 | 1:20 | - | 1 | 3 |
| S5 | 3 | 2 | 1:50-70 | 4 | 1:10 | 1 | 1 | 5 |
| S6 | - | 3 | 1:45-50 | 5-6 | 1:5-8 | 1 | - | 3 |
| **Total** | **10** | **17** | **-** | **-** | **-** | **4** | **7** | **27** |

**Source: schools studied**

**Key:** S1-S6 name of schools; dipl-diploma; degr-degree; t-s –teacher –students; No-number of; b-s- book-students; insp- inspection; nop- number of participants.

According to statistics demonstrated in the table above, the respondents' level of education was falling in diploma and degree. But the study did not bear much on levels and work experience, because the study objectives did not inquire that, in spite of the fact that the information was indicated on the questionnaire. In her study Mvungi (1974) indicated that poor teacher training had a great effect on student English language performance while Mushi (1982) and Mdima (2003) argued that low level of competence to teachers led to poor performance in English language.

The second item from the table above is teacher-student ratio. Teacher-students ratio, indicated how many students did one teacher interact with during English teaching and learning process. From the statistics, the study found that the lowest ratio was one teacher to forty five students (1:45). The data were provided by S2 and S6 secondary school respondents only. The rest of the information from the table above indicates that teacher-students ratio were very high, i.e. 1:50-70. S3, S4, and S5 Secondary Schools had the highest ratio. It can be argued that under such environment, effective teaching and learning cannot be realised. Hence, ineffective teaching leads to students' poor performance in their final examinations in English language.

Moreover, the number of classes or streams administered by one English teacher created another effect or upheaval to teaching and learning environment regardless of teacher-students ratio. Among the secondary schools researched, it was only S2 Secondary School that has a fair number of classes or streams per teacher. At S2 one teacher was teaching only three streams. This means, for five or six periods per stream it made a total of fifteen or eighteen periods for three streams per week.

Finally, under teaching environment there was a question on the questionnaire on whether English teacher seminars and school inspections were conducted. The respondents reported that at least one teacher seminar and one school inspection was conducted in the last three years at their respective schools or out of schools. The following were English teacher seminars and school inspections conducted:

First, at S1 Secondary School only one English teachers' seminar was conducted in 2010 on Teaching and Learning Technique of English Language (TLTEL) and one inspection conducted in 2010.

Second, at S2 Secondary School, the Tanzania English language Teachers Association (TELTA), conducted a seminar in 2010. Also, in 2010 only one inspection was conducted

Third, at S3, one English teacher seminar was conducted in 2012. Two School inspections were conducted in 2011 and 2012.

Fourth, at S4, there was no English teacher seminar, but only one School inspection was done in 2012.

Fifth, at S5, one English teachers seminar (CBA) and one School inspection were conducted in 2012.

Sixth, at S6, there was no any English teacher seminar conducted in the School, and teachers did not attend seminars conducted out of School. Also, there was no school inspection that was conducted from 2010 to 2012.

As the findings reveal, teachers encountered difficult situations in the process of teaching due to scarcity of teaching facilities, as also shown by Mvungi (1974) and Mlekwa (1997). Examples of hardships that teachers faced were:  teacher-students

ratio; number of periods per stream and per week; absence of English teacher seminars and school inspections conducted. The seminars and inspections are very important for recapturing of day to day changes of teaching and learning facilities in education, especially in secondary schools, example change of syllabus, textbooks etc. Other learning environments studied were: presence of libraries and text-reference books which is going to be expounded more in learning environments; number of students in a class; and so on. This study indicated that the proposed hypothesis was true. The hypothesis states that teaching environment contributed to students' poor performance in form four national examinations in English language in recent years.

## 4.4 Learning Methods used by Students During English Lessons

Learning methods are the approaches applied by students to acquire the determined objectives. The learning methods depicted by students during the research were as follows: discussion, question and answer, debate, project, dialogue, role play, jig saw, e-learning, and listening and note taking. These findings were obtained through questionnaire.

**Table 4.3: Learning Methods Identified by Students on the Questionnaire**

| Name of school | S.G.D | Q&A | Disc. | Deb | Dial | Dem | E.L | Pro | J.S | Ass | Tot |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| S1 | 3 | 3 | 3 | 3 | - | - | - | 3 | - | - | 15 |
| S2. | 3 | 3 | 3 | 1 | - | 3 | - | - | - | 1 | 10 |
| S3. | 5 | 3 | 1 | - | - | - | 2 | - | - | - | 11 |
| S4 | 5 | 1 | - | - | 1 | -- | - | - | - | - | 8 |
| S5. | 5 | 5 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 2 | 2 | - | - | - | 26 |
| S6. | 1 | 3 | 1 | 1 | - | - | - | - | 2 | - | 8 |
| **Total** | **22** | **18** | **11** | **9** | **7** | **5** | **4** | **3** | **2** | **1** | **82** |

Key: S.G.D.-Small Group Discussion; Q&A- Question and Answer; DISC-Discussion; DEB- Debate; DIAL-Dialogue; DEM- Demonstration; E-L- E-Learning; PRO-Project; J.S- Jig Saw; ASS-Assignment and TOT-Total.

The learning methods identified above, are all participatory/ communicative (Stern, 1983), since students are interacting either with the teacher or students to students. For example, during the observation at one of the schools (S3), students demonstrated their ability in reading literary book i.e. the Novel called '*Unanswered Cries'* by Osman Conte.  Students were observed being active, in the way they demonstrated their competences on reading skills (correct pronunciations of words and observed punctuation marks) themselves. Through the discussion of these learning methods, the research hypothesis which stated that learning methods contributed to students' poor performance in form four national examinations in English language in recent years tends to be null hypothesis.

Findings of the study also show that students had various views on the learning methods identified above. Such information is obtained when students were responding to the questionnaire on the advantages or benefits of the identified learning methods. The first learning method indicated was Small Group Discussion. The number of students responded to this method were twenty two (22) out of eighty two (82) students who responded to the questionnaire from six secondary schools (S1-S6). In other words, the percentage of students who responded to this learning method was twenty six point eight percent (26.8%).

During data collection, the researcher observed the application of this learning method at S1, where students organised into small groups that range from three to five students. They were discussing about setting, plot and characterisation from the book ''*Passed Like a Shadow''*. Most students who responded to this learning method had these views:  students from S4, said that the method helps them to gain

new opinions in their mind, understand more about the topic, gain new information from their fellow students and teachers. Secondly, one of students from S2, said that the method keeps them together, encourage them to exchange and have new ideas, and create cooperation and creativity among themselves. Thirdly, another student from the same school said that the method gives them quick feedback on what they know about the lesson.

Finally, most of the students who selected this learning method said that small group discussion is the easier way of sharing scarcity of textbooks and teachers as well as helping slow learners. Hence, Small Group Discussion creates independent studying and sharing of ideas among students themselves; as a result students become courageous and creative, and reduce dependence on teachers.

The second learning method that acquired more frequency was Question and Answer. This learning method was responded by eighteen students, that is twenty two percent (22%) of the respondents. Students' views on "why they were interested in this method" were as follows: first, one of the students from S2, said, "I'm interested with question and answer method, because it helps me to understand my lessons well due to the high range of gaining new information from my colleagues, and my teacher".

Also, a student from S1 said, "question and answer helps us to generate new knowledge from our fellows and in addition, it builds our self confidence for answering questions". Thirdly, student from S5 said, "question and answer is the learning approach which is common approach, it is familiar to every one, it gives

challenges and expands students' knowledge, ability of thinking and remembering the mode of questions and how they appear". Moreover, they said that the method provides more experience and new tact on how to ask questions and best ways of answering them.

The third learning method indicated by students was class discussion. Class discussion being the act of talking or conversation or writing about certain topic or subtopic with a teacher or in a group of students. The researcher experienced the application of this teaching method at S5, when students and the teacher were discussing on "Seeking and Giving Advice". The number of students who responded to this learning method were eleven (11), in other words, it was thirteen point four percent (13.4%) of students who responded to this method of teaching.

The views provided on "why they were interested with the identified learning method" were as follows: first, students from S4, said, one, "discussion method creates more understanding". Another one from the same school said, "Discussion method keeps us together encourages us to exchange and have new more ideas". Second, students from S6, said, "......... because in discussion people or students acquire skills by sharing ideas". And third, students from S5, said, "......because each student gets equal chance to say what she or he thinks about the subject matter or topic".

The fourth learning method was Debate. Debate is the discussion about a certain topic or subtopic basing on facts and opinions. The respondents of this method were nine (9), that is eleven percent (11%). The researcher has not experienced the use of

this method in the classroom context during the observation. Students' views which based on "why debate is very indispensable in their learning" were as follows: first, one of students from S5, said, "debate helps we students to express ourselves through interaction by several points according to the topic". Second, students from S1, said, "......we can have confidence on conferencing better language among students and we can know how to use appropriate language".

Also, other students from S2 andS1 argued that the method makes them to gain more knowledge from each other, and provide speaking skills and appropriate use of the language and provide different concepts (vocabularies) and improve from one stage to another. Therefore, debate enables students to reach consensus on an argumentative discussion.

The remaining learning methods on the questionnaire that obtained responses from students were six (6). These learning methods were identified, but students did not provide any views to support them, that is, why and how they were useful in their (students) learning. The methods were: dialogue, demonstration, and E-learning. Other learning methods were: project, jig saw, and assignment; their respondents were seven, five, four, three, two, and one respectively. Despite the fact that such learning methods lack views or comments from students, the methods are creative and interactive.

All in all, all the selected learning methods above, create no doubt to the researcher that students' poor performance in form four national examination in English language in recent years might not be caused by these learning methods. Hence, the

first hypothesis of this study, that is, students' poor performance in English language is related to methods of teaching and learning applied, becomes null hypothesis. The information provided by students regarding learning methods is summarised in the Figure 4.2.
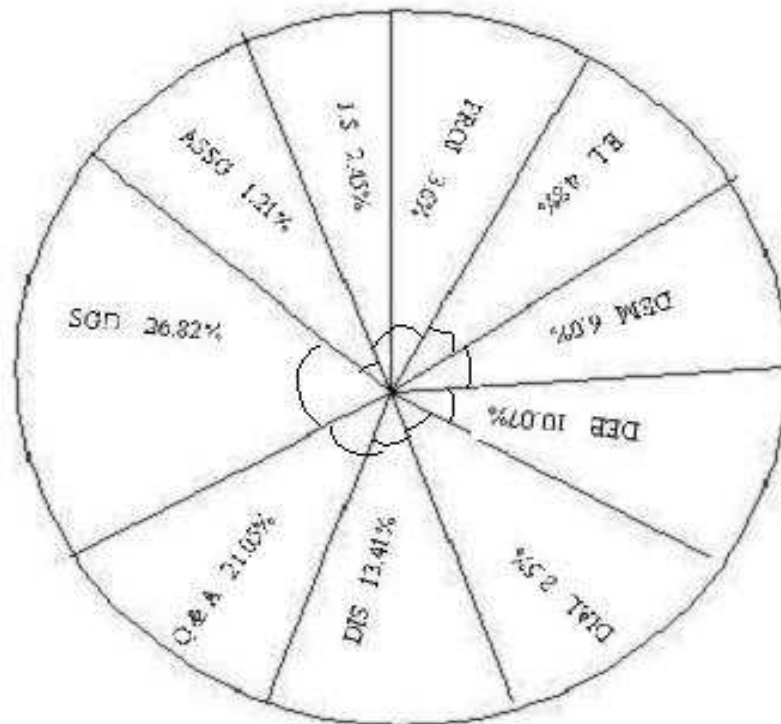


**Figure 4.2: The Learning Methods as Responded By Students**

**Key**: Small Group Discussion 26.82 percent; Question & Answer 21.05 percent; Discussion 13.41 percent; Debate 10.07 percent; Dialogue 8.5 percent; Demonstration 6 percent; E. Learning 4.8 percent; Project 3.6 percent; Jig Saw 2.43 percent and Assignment 1.21 percent.

## 4.5    Learning Environment

Learning environment involves the surrounding circumstances that in one way or another affect students in the process of acquiring knowledge, skills and attitudes. Learning environment may include number of students in a class, availability of

textbooks and reference books, school libraries, learning time, extra time for clubs such as debates. In this study, the researcher had found varieties of learning environment as displayed in the Table 4.4.

**Table 4.4: Learning Environments Studied**

| Name of School | Frm III | Frm IV | No.Std | T-st rat | Library | T-Time | Clubs | T-Aid |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| S1 | - | 5 | 50 | 1:8-12 | Present | 40min | Not pld | No |
| S2 | 2 | 3 | 45-50 | 1:5 | Present | 35min | Planned | No |
| S3 | 2 | 3 | 60 | 1:7-10 | Store | 30min | Not pld | Applied |
| S4 | 2 | 3 | 60-70 | 1:10-20 | Present | 40min | Not pld | No |
| S5 | - | 5 | 60 | 1:10 | Store | 40min | Planned | No |
| S6 | 2 | 3 | 60 | 1:5-8 | Present | 35min | Not pld | No |

**Key:** Frm-Form; No.Std-Number of Students; T-st rat-Textbook-Students ratio; T-Time – Teaching Time, and T-Aid- Teaching Aid.

The total number of students responded to learning environments' questionnaire were thirty (30). Their responses comply with the study or research hypothesis which stated that students' poor performance in national examinations in English language in recent years had relation with learning environment. The discussions of the above learning environments are expounded below.

From the table above, the first learning environment as identified by students on the questionnaire. is the 'number of students' in the classroom The number of students found in the studied schools ranged from forty five (45) to seventy one (71) students in a classroom. Such a range of students in a classroom that is fifty and above, obviously becomes difficult to be monitored by the teacher during the learning process. It can be argued that in the learning process not all students will be

checked or consulted during the learning process. The learning skills acquired in such environment could only be listening skill. Also, during the learning process, not many students are interacted to learning skills. For instance, when students are subjected to learning methods like debate or discussion, only few students who are courageous and extrovert will be involved, but slow and shy learners might not be reached, hence end up without gaining any learning skills targeted by the teacher in that particular topic. Therefore, congested classroom create unmanaged classes and contribute to students poor performance in English language in recent years.

The second item indicated that constitute learning environment was textbook-students ratio. According to the study, the information indicated that the lowest ratio was found at S2 secondary school, where one textbook was shared by five students (1:5). The rest of the schools indicated that one textbook was shared by eight to ten and above, as follows: at S1 secondary school, one textbook was shared by eight students (1:8), S3 secondary school one textbook was shared by seven to eight students (1:7-8), at S4 secondary school one textbook was shared by ten to twenty students (1:10-20), S5 secondary school one textbook was shared by ten students (1:10), and S6 secondary school was shared by five to eight students (1:5-8). These findings seem to show that some students could leave schools without touching a textbook due the scarcity of books. Some students commented on the issues of textbooks follows:

One of the students from S5 secondary school said, "the teacher comes in the class with his or her own textbook, he/she teaches us by using only his or her textbook and gives us an exercise to work on". Another student commented, "we learn in difficult

environment, because we share a textbook between ten students or more than ten".

A student from S4 secondary school commented: "we learn through notes which are given by the teacher, because we don't have textbooks".

Also, student from S2 secondary school said, "We use one textbook that is for the teacher, but if a student is well financially, she can photocopy the textbook and share with others." From the students narratives above on scarcity of textbooks and reference books, the researcher further verified the hypothesis that students' poor performance in form four national examinations in English language in recent years had relationship with school learning environment.

Moreover, as a result of the study, the researcher found other issues related to textbooks and authors. For example, there are misspelling problems on some textbook titles and mixing up of authors and publishers names. Misspelling of textbook title was identified on the book *Three Suitors: One Husband,* where the word 'Suitors' was wrongly spelled, that is 'Soitours'. In addition, the author of the book is Guillaume Oyono Mbia instead of Nyambari Nyangwine, who is the publisher of summary literature books in English.

In addition, students failed to differentiate between textbooks and reference books, Reading literary Works and Reading series. For instance, textbooks for reading literary works were cited as reference books. Worse enough, even the books on reading series in form one and two, like "*Mabala the Farmer"* and "*Hawa the Bus Driver*" were cited as reading literary works and reference books. It might be the case that even during National Examinations, some students do write the titles of

books as reading series books when responding to questions requiring them to apply the literary books read under Response to Reading (Reading Literary Work). This problem might have contributed to students' poor performance in form four national examinations in English language such as in the years 2010 to 2012.

Also, according to Mdima (2003) lack of learning facilities, such as textbooks, reference and subsidiary books were among the factors he found which led to poor performance in English language to the community secondary schools. Finally, all students who responded on textbooks and reference books indicated that the availability of books in government schools is a critical problem. The third learning environment indicated was availability of libraries in schools. The findings reveal that only sixty seven percent of the secondary schools studied had libraries, most of them being one room, and thirty three percent had no libraries, books were kept in stores as demonstrated in the Figure 4.3 and 4.4.
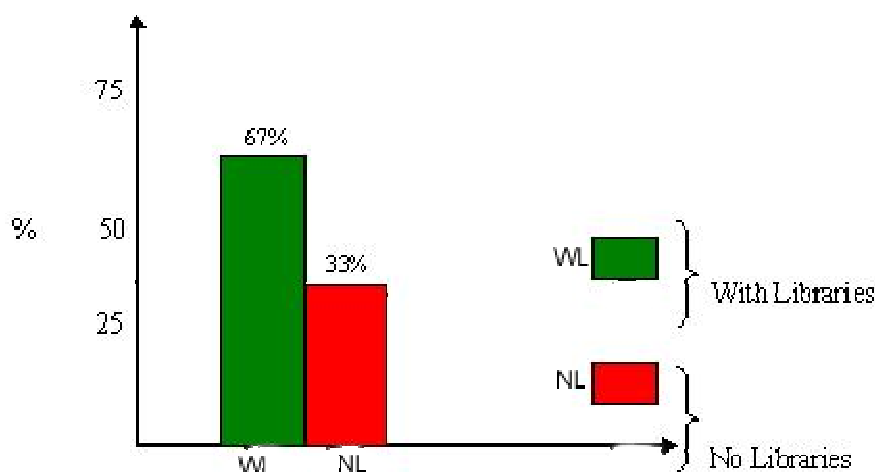


**Figure 4.3:  Library Percentage in the Studied Secondary Schools**

**Key**: WL- With Library: NL-No Library

Library at one of the studied school (S6)



Storeroom as a library at school S3

**Figure 4.4: Pictures showing categories of school libraries studied**

The observed congested classroom at school S4



The observed less congested classroom at school S1

**Figure 4.5: Pictures Indicating Various Learning Environments**

The fourth learning environment observed and indicated was the learning time. Most of the respondents showed that the time allocated for single period was ranging from thirty to forty minutes, which culminate to one hour, one hour and ten minutes, and one hour and twenty minutes to a double periods. The time-policy stipulated by the Ministry of Education is forty minutes. With these allocations, the respondents showed that time is not enough. Due to that the respondents had the following comments on time:

A student from S2 indicated; "the time is not enough, because we need a good foundation on English language in order for us to perform well. English is for communication, hence needs to be understood". Also, one of students from S3 said, "Because we do not understand what the teacher is talking about, that is why time is not enough". Another student said, "No it is not enough, because sometimes a teacher has a lot to discuss but the time is not enough, sometimes one topic can be

discussed in more than one period to two periods". Also, from the same school another student mentioned, "It is very hard to understand the lesson due to short time".

In addition, at S4, a student said, "No, because in the issue of Literature, thus, Reading literary works, we need much time in order to read literary works". Another student had similar observation, "In literature there is no enough time for reading stories and writing summaries'. Finaly, at S6, students had similar views on class time. One of them said, "It needs long time for us (students) to understand the subject so as to answer questions well". Another, student commented, "Because we have two session, time is very short due to double sessions', also. 'time is not enough, because we need to practice what we have learnt".

To conclude, fifty percent (50%) of the respondents on the time allocated for English periods said that time was not enough. And twenty five percent (25%) accepted on the efficiency of time allocated, while the remaining twenty five percent (25%) did not comment on time allocated. Due to these comments, the researcher concludes that students' poor performance in form four national examinations in English language from 2010 to 2012 might be contributed to inadequate of time on English periods. On the assessment modes, a hundred percent (100%) of the respondents showed that they are assessed through: exercises, weekly and monthly tests, class presentations, terminal and annual examinations, regional and zonal examinations.

For the fail or success of the subject, the respondents have suggested some factors that if not available might lead to poor performance in English language: good

cooperation among teachers; good cooperation between teachers and students; good cooperation among students; good cooperation from families or parents; sharing learning materials among secondary schools and availability of teachers. Others are good school administration; remedial classes and team work between school administrators and teachers. As revealed from the data collected from the studied secondary schools, this study concludes that students' poor performance in national examinations in English language in recent years could be contributed by learning environment inadequacies.

**4.6    English Language Performance at the Schools Studied**

**Table 4.5: English Language Performance Situation at the Studied Schools**

| Name of School | Year | No. Std. Sat | A | B | C | D | F |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| S1 | 2010 | 195 | - | - | 06 | 26 | 163 |
|    | 2011 | 251 | - | - | 05 | 44 | 202 |
|    | 2012 | 166 | - | - | 05 | 17 | 144 |
| S2 | 2010 | 318 | - | 21 | 89 | 78 | 119 |
|    | 2011 | 250 | 03 | 35 | 69 | 78 | 65 |
|    | 2012 | 287 | - | 09 | 97 | 81 | 100 |
| S3 | 2010 | 504 | - | - | 30 | 150 | 324 |
|    | 2011 | 338 | - | - | 40 | 102 | 196 |
|    | 2012 | 215 | - | - | 32 | 88 | 95 |
| S4 | 2010 | 428 | - | 04 | 33 | 68 | 328 |
|    | 2012 | 238 | - | - | 06 | 43 | 189 |
| S5 | 2010 | 239 | - | - | 21 | 92 | 126 |
|    | 2011 | 307 | - | 01 | 19 | 67 | 220 |
|    | 2012 | 445 | - | 01 | 16 | 57 | 371 |
| S6 | 2010 | 338 | - | 01 | 23 | 89 | 225 |
|    | 2011 | 163 | - | 03 | 28 | 46 | 86 |
|    | 2012 | 191 | - | - | 12 | 47 | 132 |

**Source**: Field notes from the studied schools 2014

From Table 4.5 shows the data indicate that across three years 2010 to 2012, the number of students who failed in English exceeded those who passed. Details for each secondary schools is provided hereunder. First, in 2010, S1 Secondary School had 195 students that sat for English language. The highest grade scored was 'C', followed by 'D' and 'F'. The students who scored 'C' were only six (06), at the percentage of three point zero seven (3.07%). And students who scored 'D' were twenty six (26) of thirteen point three percent (13.33%). While the total number of students who scored 'F' was 163 at the percentage of eighty three point five eight (83.58%). In this case, the total number of students who passed were 32, which was 16, 41%. In 2011, the number of students who sat for English language were 251. The total number of students who passed were 49, at 19.51% and students who failed were 80.47%. Also, in 2012, the students who sat for English language at S1 Secondary School were 166. In this year only 13.25% passed the examination, but the remaining 86.74% of students failed or scored grade 'F'. With regard to this study, the situation of English language continued to deteriorate, if not remain at the worst consistent miserable conditions.
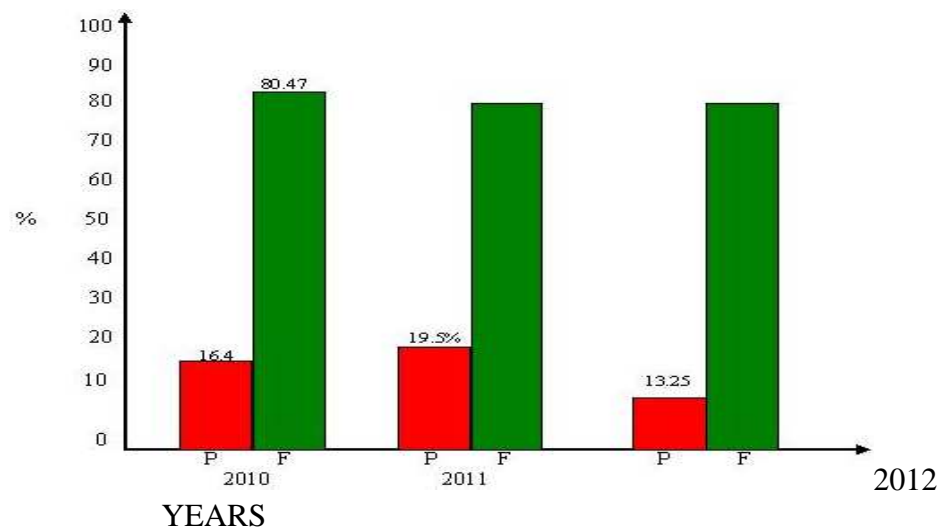


**Figure 4.6: Percentages of Passed and Failed Students at S1**

At S2 Secondary School, in 2010, the number of students who sat for English language were 318. There was no student who scored 'A', the percentage of students who scored 'B' were 6.6%, those scored 'C' were 27.98%, and 'D' were 27.98% while 'F' were 37.42%. With regard to performance grades that is A, B, C and D, students who scored 'F' were more than students who scored A or B (see % of each score). Therefore, the percentage of students who passed was 63% while those who failed was 37%. In the following year of 2011, number of students who sat for English examination was 250. The percentage of students who passed in English language Examination was 74% while those who failed was 26%.

In that year only one student scored 'A' (1.2%). Finally, in 2012, the number of students who sat for English language was 287, where only 65.16% passed English language, and 34.84% failed. The study shows that only in 2011, few students failed in comparison to other years. At S2 discussion is based on separate performance grades rather than students who passed and students who failed.
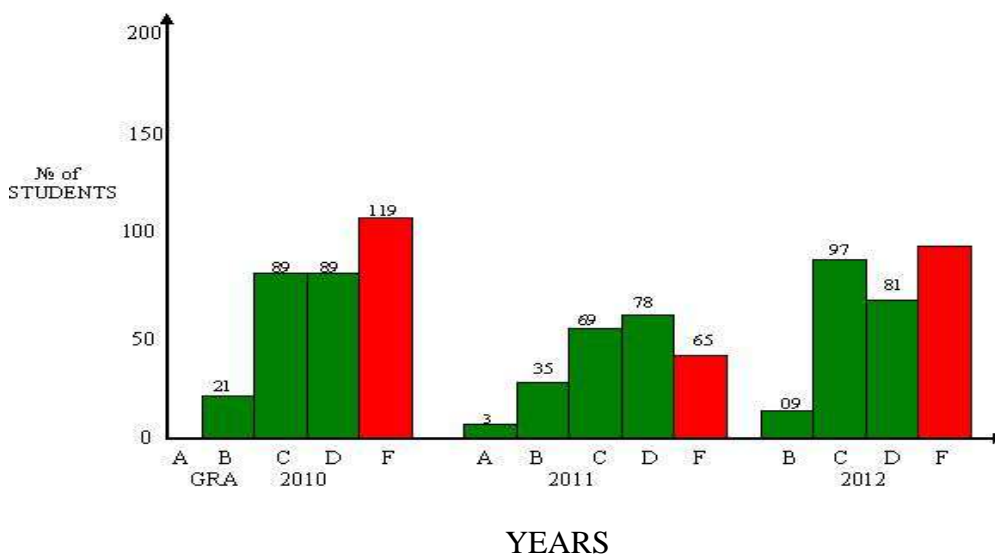


**Figure 4.7: Performance Grades Scored by Students at S2**

Third, S3 Secondary School in 2010 had 504 students who sat for English language in national examination. The school had the highest number of students compared to all secondary schools studied. Among the 504 students, only 180 students passed at the grades of 'C' and 'D' that is 35.71%. Meanwhile 324 students failed by getting 'F' that is 64.28%. Not only did the situation seemed to be bad in 2010, but was worse in 2011. The number of students who sat for the national examination in English language were 338. The students who passed by scoring 'C' and 'D' were only 41.98%, and the students who scored 'F' were 57.98%. In 2012, the percentage of the students who passed surpassed the number of students who failed at 11.53%. The number of students who sat for English language at school was 215, whereas their percentages was 55.71% and 44.18% respectively. The study indicates that among the huge number of students (1057) who sat for English language examinations consecutively in three years, there was no one student who happened to rescue the school by scoring 'A' or 'B' as the figure below demonstrates:
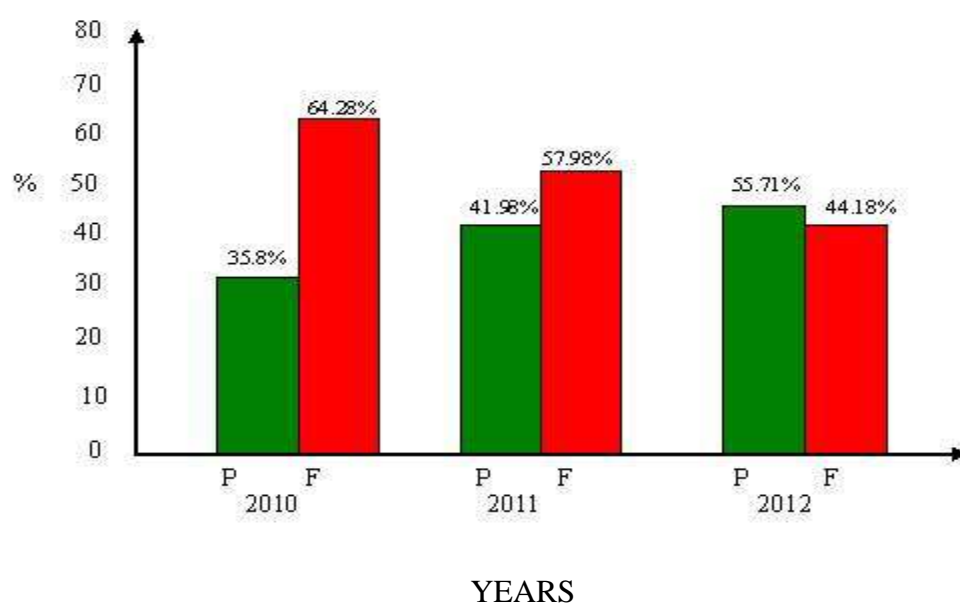


YEARS

**Figure 4.8:  S3 Passed and Failed Grades in Percentage in Three Years**

The figure indicates that in 2010 and 2011, the 'Pass' students were less than the 'Fail' students. But in 2012, the situation was triggered. This figure shows that the 'Pass' students were more than 'Fail' students. This might be the effort put forward to curb the students' poor performance through English teacher seminars and inspections conducted at S3 and to other studied secondary schools.

Furthermore, another secondary school studied that continued to experience similar problem of poor performance in English language was S4 Secondary School. From the data collected, the number of students who sat for English language in 2010 and 2012 were as follows: 438, and 238 respectively. In 2010, among the 428 students, only 24.53% of them were 'Pass' students while 76.63% were 'Fail' students. The statistics of 2011 miss, because the head of English language department who interviewed did no get them from the academic office. In 2012, the number of students who sat for national examinations in English language were 238. The 'Pass' students were 20.58% and 'Fail' students were 79.41%, as shown in    figure nine below.



YEARS
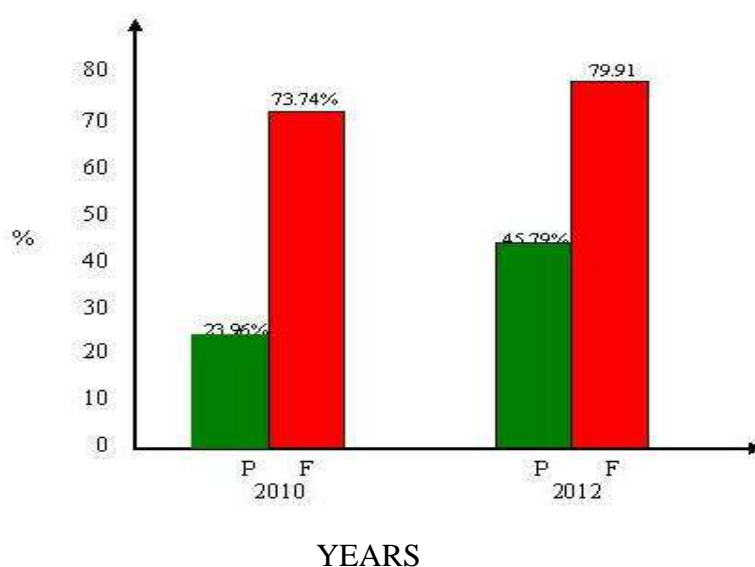
**Figure 4.9:  Percentage Passed and Failed Students at S4, 2010 and 2012**

Not only did S4 Secondary School display the results that indicated many students who had failed, but S5 Secondary School demonstrates similar results. From the table above, it is indicated that the students sat for national examinations in English language in 2010, 2011, and 2012 were as follows: 239, 307, and 445 respectively. In 2010, the students who Passed were 47.28% while Failed were 52.71%. In this year, the highest grade was 'C', which means, there were no any student who scored neither 'A' nor 'B' grades. In the following year of 2011, the students sat for English language were 307, the Passed students were 28.33% whereas Failed students were 71.66%. In the Passed students only one student scored 'B', the rest scored 'C', and 'D'. In this year the number of 'Passed' decreased and 'Failed' increased in comparable to 2010, look at the percentages of 'Passed' and 'Failed' in both years. In the year of 2012, the problem exceeded.



YEARS
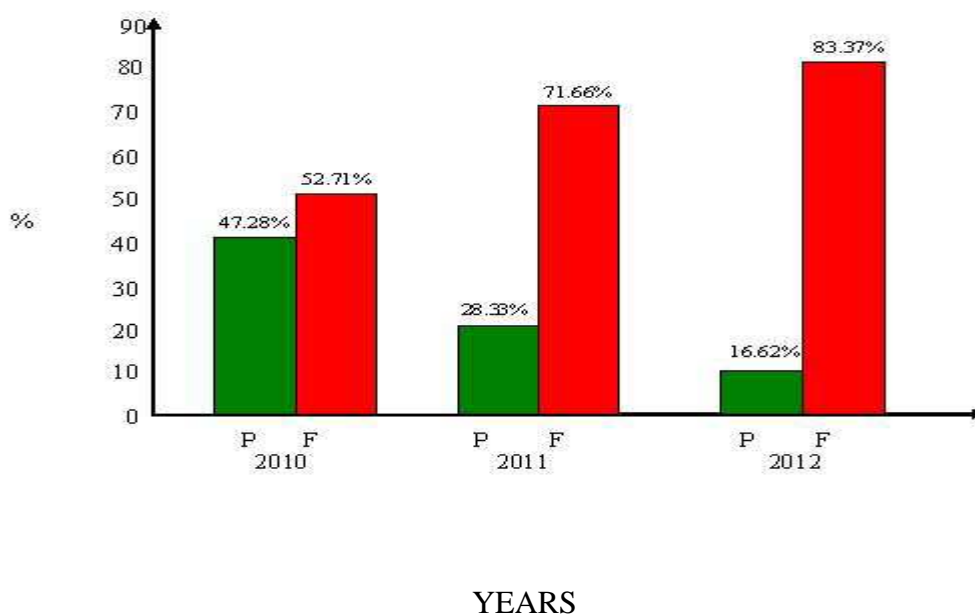
**Figure 4.10: Percentage of Passed and Failed Students at S5 from 2010 to 2012**

The number of students who sat for national examination in English language were 445. Among this number, only 16.62% of students 'Passed' and the remaining

percent 'Failed', which was 83.37%. However, one student came out with 'B' grade, the problem of more students' failing exceeded. Hence, this study can be concluded that the teaching and learning environments remained the same, despite the fact that the jeopardising of English language were recurring in the three years. The descriptions is summarised in the Figure 4.10.

Finally, S6 Secondary School. In this school the number of students who sat for national examination in English language from 2010 to 2012 were as follows: in 2010 they were 338 students; in 2011 the number was 163 while in 2012 was 191 students. In 2010, the students who obtained Pass were 33.43% while those who obtained 'Fail were 66.57%. As demonstrated on figure ten above, the Pass students started with 'B' grade, where only one student happened to acquire it. In 2011, the Pass students were 47.24% and Fail students were 52.76%. In this year, at least the percentage of Pass students increased, even though did not exceed the number of Fail students.
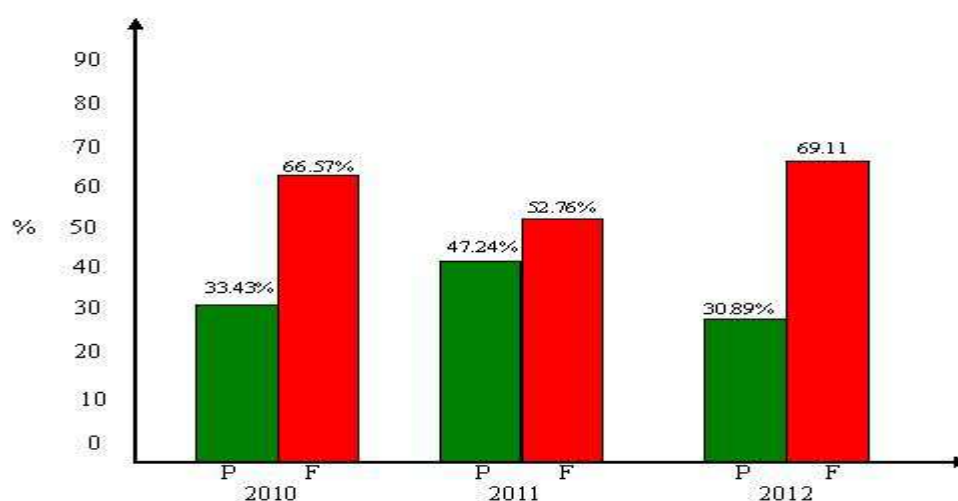


**Figure 4.11: Percentage of Passed and Failed Students at S6, 2010 – 2012**

Also, in this year, there were no students who scored 'A' grade, but those who attained grade 'B' increased compared to 2011. In the matter of fact, these results did not sustain in the following year of 2012. In this year the situation worsened; among the students who sat for English language examination, only 30.89% obtained Pass grade and the remaining percent (69.11%) obtained Fail grade. See the Figure 4.11.

In conclusion, this chapter tries to bring down the presentations analyses, and discussions of the findings on teaching and learning methods as well as teaching and learning environments which in one way or another do affect the performance of students in their final examinations in English language . The study findings seem to indicate that students' performance in recent years might have been negatively affected by teaching and learning environments.

Moreover, the Pass rates by subject in Form 4 examinations in English language BEST (2011, 2013) culminates the idea that English Language is at risk. In 2010, the students who passed were only 30.3% out of 350753 students who sat for English language in the form four national examination, in 2011only 30.1% passed and in 2012 the pass rate decreased to 26.09% (Best, 2011, 2013).

To sum up, the study findings indicate that teaching and learning environments studied at schools might be concord with research hypothesis two, which states students' poor performance is contributed by school teaching and learning environment.

## CHAPTER FIVE

## SUMMARY, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

### 5.1    Introduction

This chapter presents a summary of the study findings, conclusion and recommendations for administrative action and for further research. The purpose of the study was to investigate how teaching and learning methods, teaching and learning environment contribute (d) to students' performance in English language in secondary schools in Tanzania.

### 5.2    Summary of the Study Findings

The study findings indicated that teaching and learning methods used at studied secondary schools according to objective one were lecture, discussion, question and answer, small group discussion, demonstration, debate, role play, drama and guest honour. Other teaching and learning methods were jig saw, assignment, dialogue, e-learning and project. These methods were both used by teachers when interacting with students and students when learning.

According to presentation and discussion of the findings the methods which seemed to be commonly used were question and answer, small group discussion, discussion, debate, demonstration and dialogue. These got high frequency and percentages. Also, the discussion indicated that these teaching and learning methods could not be one of the school factors that contribute to students' poor performance in English language. Other study findings indicated teaching and learning environments of English language found at the studied secondary schools basing on study objective two.

These were first, English teacher-students ratio. The findings indicated English teacher –student ratio range from 1:45-70. The school that has lowest ratio was S2 that is 1:45-5o and the highest were S4 and S5 that is 1:50-70.

Second, number of teaching classes or streams one English teacher has. The findings show that number of classes varied from one school to another. For instance, at S1 and S6, number of streams or classes found were five to six, but at the rest of the studied schools (S2, S3, S4 and S5) an English teacher has less streams, that is three to four.

Third, English textbook-student ratio. The findings indicated that one book was or is shared by five to twenty students. Example, at S4, one English textbook was or is shared by twenty students. The school which has a low ratio was S2 that is 1:5, the remaining schools is six to twelve students share one English textbook. Moreover, the findings indicated that there are inappropriate school libraries. At the schools studied, only sixty seven percent (67%) have libraries and the remaining percent that is thirty three (33%) books are kept in the stores. Among the schools studied, those which have libraries were or are S1, S2, S4 and S6, whereas S3 and S5 books were or are kept in stores under the caring of a teachers or storekeeper.

Fourth, the findings indicated English seminars and inspections conducted within and without the school. The study showed that four English seminars and seven inspections were conducted from 2010 to 2012. For example, at S1 only one English seminar on Teaching and Learning techniques of English Language (TLTEL) was conducted in 2010. Other schools which had seminars for English teachers were S3

in 2012 and S5 in 2012. Also, the findings indicated that all schools studied had a conduction of an inspection with exception of S6 which had no inspection. From these findings that are based on research objective two, the study discussion revealed that students' poor performance in national examination in English language in recent years might be caused by school teaching and learning environment.

Moreover, the findings obtained through interviews, which conducted at the studied schools have indicated that the researched problem was true. The findings show that from 2010 to 2012, the number of students who failed in English language in national examinations was more than students who passed. At S1, for example, the total number of students who sat for English examinations in three years was 612 students. Those who failed was 509 students, while those who passed was 103. Also, at S6, the total number of students who sat for national examinations in English language was 692 students. The students who failed were 443 students and students who passed were 249 students. The study was justified on the grounds of wishing to secure information on how far problems revealed in earlier studies (Qorro, 2008; Mdima, 2003; Mlekwa, 1997 and Mushi, 1982) had been solved through the study of the materials and what limitation (gaps) there were. Such information helped on making decisions for further development of the study.

## 5.3    Conclusion

The findings of this study that is exploring the school factors for students' poor performance in national examination in English language in recent years in Tanzania, the following issues encountered:

First, all of the teaching and learning methods indicated by the studied school English teachers and students through questionnaires and observations, showed that students' poor performance in English language could not be caused by these methods, because most of these teaching and learning methods are participatory and interactive. Methods selected by both English teachers and students were lecture, question and answer, small group discussion, discussion, demonstration, debate, role play and drama. Other methods are guest of honour, jig saw, assignment, dialogue, e-learning and project.

Second, the findings indicated that in secondary schools there were inadequate or scarcity of teaching and learning environment facilities. The schools' environment studied were one teacher ratio from 45 to 70 students. For instance, S5 and S4 had 1:60 to 70, according to researcher's observations. Also, one teacher had five to six classes that culminate twenty four to thirty periods of English per week. Next, one textbook was shared by five to twenty students. Addition to that, two third of the schools studied had one roomed library whereas one third of the schools keep books in stores. Moreover, few English seminars and inspections conducted. Hence, these findings agreed with the second hypothesis of this study as verified by the school findings collected via interviews, indicated that students' poor performance in form four national examinations in English language in recent years (2010 to 2012) in Tanzania were due to school teaching and learning environment facilities.

## 5.4    Recommendations

The following recommendations are put forward for action in the light of the presented findings and conclusions.

**5.4.1    Recommendations for Administrative Action**

5.4.1.1    Improvement of Teaching and Learning Environments in Secondary Schools. The government and other education stake holders should take serious measures to improve the situations. In teaching environments, teacher- students ratio should at least be 1:35 to 45, textbooks and reference books should also be maximised number of periods a teacher has per week should be not more than fifteen periods, this shall hold water if the government employ more teachers to teach English language.

5.4.1.2 The Reliable School Inspections and Seminars Should be Conducted Every Year. Moreover, teachers should be provided with appropriate facilities for adapting for English language teaching activities, for instance from textbooks and other useful teaching resources. In learning environments, sufficient textbooks and reference books should be provided to secondary schools via the increase of capitation. For good result in English language, the better textbook-students ratio should be 1:2 rather than 1:10 to 20 as the study found. Also, urge local authors and publishers to produce more books so that sufficient books should be available in local bookshops and sell them in the cheapest price for schools and individual students to buy them.

5.4.1.3 The Reputative School Libraries Should be Constructed and Make Them Active or Live. Also, public national libraries should be rehabilitated and build new libraries to the districts and regions for extensions of learning environments. Moreover, parents should buy learning materials rather than depending on the government to do everything.

5.4.1.4 Language policy on the English language as a medium of instruction in secondary schools should be enforced by all education stakeholders.

### 5.4.2   Recommendations for Further Research

Further research needs to be conducted in the general areas of the roles of teaching and learning materials in the successful operation of English language performance in Tanzania. The aim is to check whether the used materials are relevant to syllabi. Also, the research needs to go beyond Kinondoni and Ilala-Dar-es-Salaam areas to see whether the situation is worse or better than Kinondoni and Ilala- Dar-es-Salaam area. In addition, the research needs to use correlation study to see how private secondary schools' teaching and learning environments contribute to students' performance in English language in relation to public secondary schools.

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**APPENDECIES**

**Appendix  I: Questionnaire for English Teachers**

My name is Manga Matiko Mariba. Student at the Open University of Tanzania (OUT). Studying for a Master degree of Education in Administration, Planning and Policy Studies (MED APPS). Am conducting a research on exploring school factors for students' poor performance in form four national examinations in english language 2010 to 2012 in tanzania. Therefore, I request for your assistance in this research by responding to this questionnaire for the purpose of information needed in the research. Information provided shall be handled with great confidentiality. Shall not be exposed to any person, with exception of the researcher. Thank you for your cooperation.

INSTRUCTIONS: Tick the correct number /answer provided in each question, and give the explanations if needed.

1.    Name of the School……………………………………………………

2.    Sex of respondent/ teacher

   (i)    Male

   (ii)   Female

3.    Level of Education.

   (i)    Diploma

   (ii)   Degree

(iii)   Masters degree

(iv)   Others (specify)…………………………………………………………………

4.   Teaching experience

(i)   One year to five years

(ii)   Six to ten years

(iii)   More than ten (please, specify)……………………………………….

5.   Number of schools you have taught

(i)   One

(ii)   More than one (Specify)………………………..……………………..

6.   Forms you are teaching now / was teaching previously

(i)   Three

(ii)   Four

(iii)   Five

(iv)   Others (specify)…………………….……….…………………………..

7.   Number of students in your classroom

(i)   Less than 40 (Specify please)…………………………..……………….

(ii)   More than 40 (Specify)……………………………….……………..

8.   Number of streams you are teaching

(i)   Less than five (Specify)…………………………..………………..

(ii)   More than five (specify)…………………………………………………

9.  Number of teaching periods in a week per stream

    (i)   Less than five (specify)………………………….…………………………

    (ii)  More than five (specify)………………………………...……………….

10. Teaching time

    (i)   Less than 40 minutes (specify)……………………………….……………

    (ii)  More than 40 minutes (specify)…………………………….…………..

11. Is the time allocated for teaching enough?

    (i)   Yes

    (ii)  No

12. If Yes or No. Please, give reasons

    ……………………………………………………………………………………

    ……………………………………………………………………………………

    ……………………………………………………………………………………

13. The teaching approaches you usually use (circle them)

    (a)  Lecture, (b) Demonstration, (c) Instruction, (d) Film/video, (e) Guest
    Speaker (f) Preaching, (g) Question and Answer, (h) Discussion, (i) Small
    Group discussion, (j) Debate, (k ) Field trip, (l)  Case study, (m) Role play, (n)
    Jig Jaw, (o) Project/Independent study, (p) Symposium, (q) Simulation, (r)
    Drama, (s) E. Learning/ on line instruction. (t) Others (specify)…………..……

14. Among the approaches circled, which one are more advantageous. Write their
    numbers, and provide reasons.

    ……………………………………………………………………………………

…………………………………………………………………………………………….

…………………………………………………………………………………………

…………………………………………………………………………………………...

15.  Are the approaches appreciated by students?

(i)  Yes

(ii)  No

16.  If yes or no, please, give reasons

…………………………………………………………………………………………

…………………………………………………………………………………………

…………………………………………………………………………………………

…………………………………………………………………………………………

17.  Availability of English textbooks.

(i)  Available

(ii)  Not available

18.  If available, give textbook students ratio ………………………………………

19.  If not available, please, provide the reasons

…………………………………………………………………………………………

…………………………………………………………………………………………

…………………………………………………………………………………………

………………………………………………………………………………………….

20. Availability of English reference books

    (i)    Available

    (ii)   Not available

21. If available, are they accessible to students?

    (i)    Yes

    (ii)   No. Give reasons for any answer

………………………………………….…………………………………………

………………………………………………………………………………………

…………………………………………………………………………………………

22. Is your school library active?

    (i)    Yes

    (ii)   No

23. If yes or no give reasons, how it accommodates or not accommodates

students……………………………………………………………………

………………………………………………………………………………

………………………………………………………………………………

25. Other teaching Aid/devices

    (i)    Head Projectors

    (ii)   Computers

    (iii)  Others (specify)…………………………………………………………..

26. After class hours, do students have extra time for involving in various activities or interactions, like in clubs?

   (i)   Yes

   (ii)  No

27. If yes or no, give descriptions how and why?

   …………………………………………………………………………………

   …………………………………………………………………………………

28. Number of seminars/ workshops you have attended.

   (i)   None

   (ii)  One (year)……………………………………………….……………

   (iii) More than one (specify and years)……………………………………

29. If done, please, tell the year, and was on what?................................................

   ..................................................................................................................................

   ..................................................................................................................................

30. Inspections conducted in your school.

   (i)   None

   (ii)  One. Write the year …………….......................................................

   (iii) More than one. Write the years ……………………………………….…

31. Please, categorise the assessment inputs in your school.eg exercises, tests etc. Are they valid?

   …………………………………………………………………………………

   ..................................................................................................................................

32.	Please, provide further information or comment for the success of the course.

……………………………………………………………………………………

……………………………………………………………………………………

……………………………………………………………………………………

**I appreciate your cooperation**

**Appendix II: Questionnaire for Students**

My name is Manga Matiko Mariba. Student at the Open University of Tanzania (OUT). Studying for a Master degree of Education in Administration, Planning and Policy Studies (MED APPS). Am conducting a research on exploring school factors for students' poor performance in form four national examinations in english language 2010 to 2012 in tanzania. Therefore, I request for your assistance in this research by responding to this questionnaire for purpose of information needed in the research. Information provided shall be handled with great confidentiality. Shall not be exposed to any person, with exception of the researcher. Thank you for your cooperation.

INSTRUCTIONS: Tick the correct number/ answer in each question and provide short

explanation where needed

1. Name of school …………………………………………........................

2. Your name [optional]……………………….Day scholar [---] ,boarding [---]

3. Sex:      1-Male              2-Female

4. Form:

    (i)   Form Three

    (ii)  Form Four

    (iii) Form Five

5. How many are you (students) in your class/stream

    (i)   Less than 40(specify)_____.

    (ii)  More than 40(specify)_____.

6.   Number of English periods per week

(i)   Less than five (specify) …………………………………….…………….

(ii)  Five or more (specify) ……………………………………………..…..

7.   Teaching time:

(i)   Less than 40 minutes (specify)……………..…..……………………….

(ii)  More than 40 minutes (specify)…………………...…………………….

8.   Is the time enough?

(i)   Yes

(ii)  No

9.   If yes or no, please, give reasons.

.......................................................................................................................

.......................................................................................................................

.......................................................................................................................

10.  Do you have extra time for individual activities/ interactions like clubs?

(i)   Yes

(ii)  No

11.  If yes, name the activities:

………………………………………………………………………………

………………………………………………………………………………

12. Circle the teaching and learning approaches used in the class among these:

    (a) Lecture, (b) Discussion, (c) Small group discussion, (d) Question and answer, (e) Demonstration, (f) Debate, (g) Project, (h) Dialogue, (i) Role play, (j) E. learning. (k) Others (Please specify)……………………….………………

13. Among these approaches, name the common one. Are you interested with them?. If yes or no, give reasons

    ………………………………………………………………………...…………

    ………………………………………………………………………...…………

    …………………………………………………………………………..……………

    ……………………………………………………………………………………

14. Learning Aid

    (i)    Are textbooks available?  (a)  Yes  (b)  No

    (ii)   If yes, what is textbook student ratio. ……………………………………..

    (iii)  iii. If no, tell how do you learn?

    ............................................................................................................................

    ............................................................................................................................

    (vi)  Are the reference books available?  (a)  Yes  (b) No

15. School library present?  1. Yes 2. No

16. Are the text and reference books found in the school library?

    (i)    Yes

    (ii)   No

17. If yes, write their titles and authors

    (a) Text books:

    ……………………………………………………………………...……………

    …………………………………………………………………..……………

    (b) Reference books:

    ……………………………………………………………………………………

    ……………………………………………………………………………………

18. Does library provide services of borrowing books?

    (i) Yes

    (ii) No

19. Does library have studying rooms?

    (i) Yes

    (ii) No

20. Do parents support your study?

    (i) Yes

    (ii) No

21. If yes or no, explain please

    ……………………………………………………………………………………

    ……………………………………………………………………………………

    ……………………………………………………………………………………

22. Please, write down the ways you are assessed/tested

    ……………………………………84…………………………………………

    ……………………………………………………………………………

23.   Please, list other factors that influence your learning which have not appeared in

this questionnaire

……………………………………………………………………….........

……………………………………………………………………………

……………………………………………………………………………

Thank you for responding to this questionnaire. All the best in your studies

**Appendix III: Observation**

1.   Name of school………………….………………………………………………

2.   Name of the teacher (Option). …………...………………………………….

3.   Form/stream……………………………………….……………………..

4.   Number of students in the class……………..…………………………

5.   Subject matter/topic/subtopic……………………………………………..

6.   Introduction of the topic/ transition

     ………………………………………….……………………………………
     ………………………………………….……………………………………
     ………………………………………….……………………………………

7.   Teacher's teaching techniques: participatory or non-participatory with examples

     …………………………………………………………………………………
     …………………………………………………………………………………
     …………………………………………………………………………………
     …………………………………………………………………………………

8.   Teaching activities (by a teacher)

     …………………………………………………………………………………
     …………………………………………….……………………………………
     …………………………………………………………………………………
     …………………………………………………………………………………

9.   Students' learning techniques/ interactions (teacher vs students, students vs students)

     …………………………………………….……………………………………

…………………………………………………………………………………

…………………………………………………………………………………

10.     Learning activities (done by students)

…………………………………………………………………………………

…………………………………………………………………………………

…………………………………………………………………………………

11.     Classroom environment

…………………………………………………………………………………

…………………………………………………………………………………

…………………………………………………………………………………

12.     Sitting arrangement

…………………………………………………………………………………

…………………………………………………………………………………

…………………………………………………………………………………

…………………………………………………………………………………

13.  Classroom control/ classroom management

…………………………………………………………………………………

…………………………………………………………………………………

14.     Textbooks

…………………………………………………………………………………

…………………………………………………………………………………

End of Observation

**Appendix IV: Interview**

**ACADEMIC MASTER/HEAD OF ENGLISH DEPARTMENT**

1.   Name of the school…………………………………

2.   Name of Academic/ H/Department. …………………………

3.   Number of forms/classes/streams. …………………………………………………

4.   Number of students…………………, form……………, stream……………..…

5.   Number of teachers…………………………, forms……………..……………

6.   Teacher-students ratio. …………………………………………..……………

7.   Number of English books in the library…………………………………………

8.   Teachers' books…………………………………………………..……………

9.   Students' books……………………………………………….………………

10.   Reference books………………………………………………………………

11.   Methods of interaction of students and teachers in the classes ………………….

12.   Language for the medium of instructions. …………………………………

13.   Seminars and workshops on English teaching conducted in the school/ outside

      the school……………………………………………......................................

14.   Categories of assessments……………………………………………………

15.   Records of previous results

      A.   Total of students sat for E.L. and their grades:

      (i)   2010,----------, A.---------,B.---------,C.--------,D.------,F-------------------

      (ii)   2011.-------------,A.-----------,B.---------C.----------.D.------.F-------------

      (iii)   2013.-------------,A.------------,B----------.C----------.D.---------.F.-----------

*THANK YOU VERY MUCH FOR YOUR CARING*

**Appendix  V: Inventory of English Books in School Library**

1.    Name of the school…………………………………………………………

2.    Number of English books in the library……………………...………………….…

3.    Form three English books in the library (title, author, and year)………………..

      ……………………………………………………………………………………..

4.    Form four English books in the library (title, author, and year).

      …………………………………………………………………………………...

5.    Form five English books in the library (title, author, and year).

      …………………………………………………………….…………….....................

6.    Textbooks in the library………………………………….......................................

7.    Reference books in the library……………………………….…………........

8.    Teachers' guide books in the library………………………...……………………..

9.    Students' books in the library……………………………………………………

## Appendix VI: Research Clearance Letter

THE OPEN UNIVERSITY OF TANZANIA

DIRECTORATE OF RESEARCH, PUBLICATIONS, AND POSTGRADUATE STUDIES

P.O. Box 23409 Fax: 255-22-2668759Dar es
Salaam, Tanzania,
http://www.out.ac.tz

Tel: 255-22-2666752/2668445 ext.2101
Fax: 255-22-2668759,
E-mail: drpc@out.ac.tz

17/01/2014

District Education Officer
P.O. Box
KINONDONI

RE: RESEARCH CLEARANCE

The Open University of Tanzania was established by an act of Parliament no. 17 of 1992. The act became operational on the 1st March 1993 by public notes No. 55 in the official Gazette. Act number 7 of 1992 has now been replaced by the Open University of Tanzania charter which is in line the university act of 2005. The charter became operational on 1st January 2007. One of the mission objectives of the university is to generate and apply knowledge through research. For this reason the staffs and students undertake research activities from time to time.

To facilitate the research function, the vice chancellor of the Open University of Tanzania was empowered to issue research clearance to both staffs and students of the university on behalf of the government of Tanzania and the Tanzania Commission of Science and Technology.

The purpose of this letter is to introduce to you **Mr. Manga M. Mariba Reg. No. HD/E/763/T.13** is a Masters student at the Open University of Tanzania. By this letter **Manga M. Mariba** has been granted clearance to conduct research in the country. The title of her research is **"Factors for Students' Poor Performance in Form Four National Examinations in English Language 2010 to 2012 in Tanzania"**. The research will be conducted in Kinondoni District.

The period which this permission has been granted is from 3rd February, 2014 to 30th March, 2014.

In case you need any further information, please contact:
The Deputy Vice Chancellor (Academic)
The Open University of Tanzania
P.O. Box 23409
Dar es Salaam
Tel: 022-2-2668820

We thank you in advance for your cooperation and facilitation of this research activity.
Yours sincerely,

Prof Shaban Mbogo

For: VICE CHANCELLOR

THE OPEN UNIVERSITY OF TANZANIA